Good night. Good night!
Parting is such sorrow
that I shall say good-
night till it be to-morrow.
Act 2. Scene 2. Line
185

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THE STUDENTS' HANDY EDITION.

THE WORKS

OF

SHAKESPEARE:

THE TEXT CAREFULLY RESTORED ACCORDING TO
THE FIRST EDITIONS; WITH INTRODUCTIONS,
NOTES ORIGINAL AND SELECTED, AND
A LIFE OF THE POET;

BY THE

REV. H. N. HUDSON, A.M.

REVISED EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. XI.

BOSTON:
ESTES AND LAURIAT,
301 WASHINGTON STREET.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET.

THE story, which furnished the ground-work of THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET, was exceedingly popular in Shakespeare's time; it had been made so to his hand, and of course it became more so in his hand. Mr. Douce has shown, that in some of its main incidents it bears a strong resemblance to an old Greek romance by Xenophon of Ephesus, entitled "The Love-adventures of Abrocomas and Anthia." The original author, however, of the story as received in the Poet's time was Luigi da Porto, of Vincenza, who died in 1529. His novel, called *La Giulietta*, was first published in 1535, six years after his death. In an epistle prefixed to the work, the author says that the story was told by "an archer of mine, whose name was Peregrino, a man about fifty years old, well-practised in the military art, a pleasant companion, and, like almost all his countrymen of Verona, a great talker." Luigi's work was reprinted in 1539, and again in 1553. From him the matter was borrowed and improved by Bandello, who published it in 1554, making it the ninth novel in the second part of his collection. Bandello represents the incidents to have occurred when Bartholomew Scaliger was lord of Verona. And it may be worth noting, that the Veronese, who believe the tale to be historically true, fix its date in 1303, at which time the family of Scala or Scaliger held the rule of the city.

The story is next met with in the *Histoires Tragiques* of Belleforest. It makes the third piece in that collection; and, as the first six pieces were rendered into French by Boisteau, it follows that this tale was translated by him, and not by Belleforest. The *Histoires Tragiques* were professedly taken from Bandello, but some of them vary considerably from the Italian; as in this very piece, according to Bandello, Juliet awakes from her trance in time to hear Romeo speak and see him die, and then, instead of stabbing herself with his dagger, dies apparently of a broken

heart; whereas Boisteau has it the same in this respect as we find it in the play.

The earliest English version of the story, that has come down to us, is a poem entitled "The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet," written by Arthur Brooke, and published in 1562. This purports to be from the Italian of Bandello, but the French of Boisteau was evidently made use of by Brooke, as his version agrees with the French in making the heroine's trance continue till after the death of her lover. In some respects, however, the poem is entitled to the rank of an original work; the author not tying himself strictly to any known authority, but giving something of freedom to his own invention. We say *known* authority, because in his prose introduction Brooke informs us that the tale had already been put to work on the English stage. His words are as follows: "Though I saw the same argument lately set forth on the stage with more commendation than I can look for, yet the same matter, penned as it is, may serve to like good effect, if the readers do bring with them like good minds to consider it; which hath the more encouraged me to publish it, such as it is."

The only ancient reprint of Brooke's poem known to us was made in 1587; though it was entered a second time at the Stationers' in 1582. Malone set forth an edition of it in 1780; and in our own time Mr. Collier has given a very careful and accurate reprint of it in his Shakespeare's Library. In sentiment, imagery, and versification, the poem has very considerable merit. It is written in rhyme, the lines consisting, alternately, of twelve and fourteen syllables. On the whole, it may rank among the best specimens we have of the popular English literature of that period; being not so remarkable for reproducing the faults of the time, as for rising above them.

Of Brooke himself very little is known. In a poetical address "to the Reader," prefixed to the Tragical History, he speaks of this as "my youthful work," and informs us that he had written other works "in divers kinds of style." We learn, also, from the body of the poem, that he was unmarried; and in 1563 there came out "An Agreement of sundry Places of Scripture," by Arthur Brooke, with some verses prefixed by Thomas Brooke, informing us that the author had perished by shipwreck. George Turbervile, also, in his Epitaphs and Epigrams, 1567, has one "On the Death of Master Arthur Brooke, drowned in passing to Newhaven;" and mentions the story of Romeus and Juliet as proving that he "for metre did excel."

In 1567, five years after the date of Brooke's poem, a prose version of the same tale was published by William Paynter, in his Palace of Pleasure, a collection of stories made from divers sources, ancient and modern. Paynter calls it "The goodly History of the true and constant love between Rhomeo and Julietta." It is merely a literal translation from the French of Boisteau, and by

no means skilfully done, at that; though even here the interest of the tale is such as to triumph over the bungling rudeness of the translator. This version, also, has been lately reprinted by Mr. Collier in the work mentioned above.

These two are the only English forms, of an earlier date than the tragedy, in which the story has reached us. But the contemporary references to it are such and so many as to show that it must have stood very high in popular favour. For instance, a brief argument of the tale is given by Thomas Delapeend in his Pleasant Fable of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis, 1565; and Barnabe Rich, in his Dialogue between Mercury and a Soldier, 1574, says that the story was so well known as to be represented on tapestry. Allusions to it are also found in The Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions, 1578; in A Poor Knight's Palace of Private Pleasure, 1579; and in Austin Saker's Narbonus, 1580. After this time, such notices become still more frequent and particular; and the Stationers' books show an entry of "A new Ballad of Romeo and Juliet," by Edward White, in 1596; of which, however, nothing has been discovered in modern times.

This popularity was doubtless owing in a large measure to the use of the story in dramatic form. We have already found that Brooke had seen it on the stage before 1562. That so great and general a favourite should have been suffered to leave the boards after having once tried its strength there, is nowise probable: so that we may presume it to have been kept at home on the stage in one shape or another, till Shakespeare took it in hand, and so far eclipsed all who had touched it before, that their labours were left to perish.

Whether Shakespeare availed himself of any preceding drama on the subject, we are of course without the means of knowing. Nor, in fact, can we trace a connection between the tragedy and any other work except Brooke's poem. That he made considerable use of this, is abundantly certain, as may be seen from divers verbal resemblances set forth in our notes. That he was acquainted with Paynter's version, is indeed more than probable; but we can discover no sign of his having resorted to it for the matter of his scenes, as the play has nothing in common with this, but what this also has in common with the poem. On the other hand, besides the verbal resemblances set forth in our notes, the play agrees with Brooke in divers particulars where Brooke differs from Paynter. The strongest instance, perhaps, of this is in the part of the Nurse, which is considerably extended in the poem: especially, she there endeavours, as in the play, to persuade Juliet into the marriage with Paris; of which there is no trace in the prose version. Moreover, the *character* of the Nurse has in the poem a dash of original humour, approaching somewhat, though not much, towards the Poet's representation of her. As regards the incidents, the only differences worth noting between the poem and the

play are in the death of Mercutio, and in the meeting of Romeo and Paris, and the death of the latter, at the tomb of Juliet.

The play was first printed in 1597, with a title-page reading as follows: "An excellent-conceited Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet: As it hath been often, with great applause, played publicly, by the Right Honourable the Lord of Hunsdon his Servants. London: Printed by John Danter. 1597." Here we have one point worth special noting. Until the accession of James, the company to which Shakespeare belonged were, as we have repeatedly seen, called "the Lord Chamberlain's Servants." Henry Lord Hunsdon, Lord Chamberlain, died on the 22d of July, 1596. George, the successor to his title, did not immediately succeed to the office: this was conferred on Lord Cobham, who held it till his death, in March, 1597; and the new Lord Hunsdon did not become Lord Chamberlain till the 17th of April. It was only during this interval that the company in question were known as the Lord Hunsdon's Servants. Malone hence concludes that the play was first *performed* between July, 1596, and April, 1597; but this is by no means certain; it merely proves that the play was *printed* during that period: for, however the company may have been designated at the first acting of the play, they would naturally have been spoken of in the title-page as the Lord Hunsdon's Servants, if they were so known at the time of the printing.

Another question, that may as well be disposed of here, is, whether the first issue of Romeo and Juliet was authentic and complete, as the play then stood; which question is best answered by Mr. Collier. "This edition," says he, "is in two different types, and was probably executed in haste by two different printers. It has been generally treated as an authorised impression from an authentic manuscript. Such, after the most careful examination, is not our opinion. We think that the manuscript used by the printer or printers was made up, partly from portions of the play as it was acted, but unduly obtained, and partly from notes taken at the theatre during representation. Our principal ground for this notion is, that there is such great inequality in different scenes and speeches, and in some places precisely that degree and kind of imperfectness, which would belong to manuscript prepared from defective short-hand notes. We do not of course go the length of contending that Shakespeare did not alter and improve the play, subsequent to its earliest production on the stage; but merely that the quarto of 1597 does not contain the tragedy as it was originally represented."

The next issue of the play was in a quarto pamphlet of 46 leaves, the title-page reading thus: "The most excellent and lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, newly corrected, augmented, and amended: As it hath been sundry times publicly acted by the Right Honourable the Lord Chamberlain his Servants. London: Printed by Thomas Creede for Cuthbert Burby, and are to

be sold at his shop near the Exchange. 1599." There was a third quarto issue in 1609, which was merely a reprint of the foregoing, save that in the title-page we have, "acted by the King's Majesty's Servants at the Globe," and, "Printed for John Smethwick, and are to be sold at his shop in St. Dunstan's Churchyard, in Fleet-street, under the Dial." There was also a fourth edition in quarto, undated, but probably issued between 1609 and 1623. The folio of 1623 gives it as the fourth in the division of Tragedies, and without any marking of the acts and scenes, save that at the beginning we have, "*Actus Primus. Scœna Prima.*" The folio, though omitting several passages found in the quarto of 1609, is shown, by the repetition of certain typographical errors, to have been printed from that copy. In our text, as in that of most modern editions, the quarto of 1599 is taken as the basis, and the other old copies drawn upon for the correction of errors, and sometimes for a choice of readings; in both which respects the quarto of 1597 is of great value. Our variations from the second quarto are duly specified in the notes.

As may well be supposed, the second issue evinces a considerably stronger and riper authorship than the first; for of course the Poet would hardly proceed to rewrite the play until he thought that he could make important changes for the better. How much the play was "augmented" may be judged from the fact that in Steevens' reprint of the editions of 1597 and 1609, both of which are in the same volume and the same type, the first occupies only 73 pages, the other 99. The augmentations are much more important in quality than in quantity; and both these and the corrections show a degree of judgment and tact hardly consistent with the old notion of the Poet having been a careless writer; though it is indeed much to be regretted that he did not carry his older and severer hand into some parts of the play, which he left in their original state. In our notes will be found a few passages — especially Juliet's speech on taking the sleeping-draught, in Act iv. sc. 3, and Romeo's speech just before he swallows the poison, in Act v. sc. 3, — as they stand in the quarto of 1597; from which the reader may form some judgment of the difference between the original and amended copies in respect of quality. The same may be said of Juliet's soliloquies in Act ii. sc. 5, and in Act iii. sc. 2; which, particularly the latter, are comparatively nothing, as given in the first edition.

The date more commonly assigned for the writing of this tragedy is 1596. This is allowing only a space of about two years between the writing and rewriting of the play; and we fully agree with Knight and Verplanck, that the second edition shows such a measure of progress in judgment, in the cast of thought, and in dramatic power, as would naturally infer a much longer interval. And the argument derived from this circumstance is strengthened

by another piece of internal evidence. The Nurse, in reckoning up the age of Juliet, has the following:

> "On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
> That shall she, marry: I remember it well.
> 'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;
> And she was wean'd, — I never shall forget it, —
> Of all the days of the year, upon that day.
> Shake, quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,
> To bid me trudge.
> And since that time it is eleven years;
> For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,
> She could have run and waddled all about;
> For even the day before she broke her brow."

This passage was first pointed out by Tyrwhitt as probably referring to a very memorable event thus spoken of by the English chronicler of that period: "On the 6th of April, 1580, being Wednesday in Easter week, about 6 o'clock toward evening, a sudden earthquake happening in London, and almost generally throughout all England, caused such amazedness among the people as was wonderful for the time." There are indeed discrepancies in what the Nurse says, that more or less dash the certainty of the allusion. First, she says that Juliet was not weaned, then, proud of "bearing a brain," gets entangled in her reminiscent garrulity, and at last ties up in the remembrance that she could talk and "waddle all about;" but yet she sticks to the "eleven years." It is not so much, therefore, to what was in her thoughts, as to what was in theirs for whom the speech was written, that we must look for the bearing of the allusion.

Now, at the time of the event in question, the great clock at Westminster, and divers other clocks and bells struck of themselves with the shaking of the earth: the lawyers supping in the Temple ran from their tables and out of the halls, with the knives in their hands: the people assembled at the theatres rushed forth into the fields, lest the galleries should fall: the roof of Christ church near Newgate-market was so shaken, that a stone dropped out of it, killing two persons, it being sermon time: chimneys were topped down, and houses shattered. All which circumstances were well adapted to keep the event fresh in popular remembrance; and it was with this remembrance, most likely, that the Poet mainly concerned himself. We give the rest of the argument in the words of Knight: "Shakespeare knew the double world in which an excited audience lives; the half belief in the world of poetry amongst which they are placed during a theatrical representation, and the half consciousness of the external world of their ordinary life. The ready disposition of every audience to make a transition from the scene before them to the scene in which they ordi-

narily move, is perfectly well known to all who are acquainted with the machinery of the drama. In the case before us, even if Shakespeare had not this principle in view, the association of the English earthquake must have been strongly in his mind, when he made the Nurse date from an earthquake. Without reference to the circumstance of Juliet's age, he would naturally, dating from the earthquake, have made the date refer to the period of his writing the passage, instead of the period of Juliet's being weaned. But, according to the Nurse's chronology, Juliet had not arrived at that epoch in the lives of children, till she was three years old. The very contradiction shows that Shakespeare had another object in view than that of making the Nurse's chronology tally with the age of her nursling."

This of course would throw the original writing of the play back to the year 1591, or thereabouts, and so give ample time for the growth of mind indicated by the additions and improvements of the second issue. However, we do not regard the argument from the Nurse's speech as conclusive; for, even granting the Poet to have had his thoughts on the particular earthquake in question, it does not follow that he would have made the Nurse perfectly accurate in her reckoning of time. It may be worth observing, in this connection, that there appears some little remembrance, one way or the other, between the play and Daniel's Complaint of Rosamond, published in 1592. The passage from Daniel is given in Act v. sc. 3, note 7; so that it need not be quoted here. It will be seen, from the preceding note, that, except in one slight particular, the resemblances both of thought and expression are not found in the oldest copy of the play. Nor even in that particular is the resemblance so close as to infer any more acquaintance than might well enough have been formed by the ear; and Daniel was a man of theatrical tastes. So that this does not necessarily make against 1591 as Shakespeare's true date; though whether Daniel first improved upon him, and then he upon Daniel, or whether the original writing of the play was not till after the printing of the poem, cannot with certainty be affirmed.

At all events, we are quite satisfied, from many, though for the most part undefinable, tricks of style, that the tragedy in its original state was produced somewhere between 1591 and 1595. The cast of thought and imagery, but especially the large infusion, not to say preponderance, of the lyrical element, naturally associates it to the same stage of art and authorship which gave us A Midsummer-Night's Dream. The resemblance of the two plays in these respects is too strong and clear, we think, to escape any studious eye, well-practised in discerning the Poet's different styles. And a diligent comparison of Romeo and Juliet with, for example, the poetical scenes in the First Part of King Henry IV., which was published in 1598, will suffice for the conclusion that the former must have been written several years before the latter.

We have seen that nearly all the incidents of the tragedy were borrowed, the Poet's invention herein being confined to the duel of Mercutio and Tybalt, and the meeting of Romeo and Paris at the tomb. In the older English versions of the story, there is a general fight between the partizans of the two houses; when, after many have been killed and wounded on both sides, Romeo comes in, tries in vain to appease with gentle words the fury of Tybalt, and at last kills him in self-defence. What a vast gain of dramatic life and spirit is made by Shakespeare's change in this point, is too obvious to need insisting on. Much of a certain amiable grace, also, is reflected upon Paris from the circumstances that occasion his death; and the character of the heroine is proportionably raised by the beauty and pathos thus shed around her second lover; there being, in the older versions, a cold and selfish policy in his love-making, which dishonours both himself and the object of it. The judicious bent of the Poet's invention is the more apparent in these particulars, that in the others he did but reproduce what he found in Brooke's poem. Moreover, the incidents, throughout, are disposed and worked out with all imaginable skill for dramatic effect; so that what was before a comparatively lymphatic and lazy narrative is made redundant of animation and interest.

In respect of character, too, the play has little of formal originality beyond Mercutio and the Nurse; though all are indeed set forth with a depth and vigour and clearness of delineation to which the older versions of the tale can make no pretension. It scarce need be said, that the two characters named are, in the Poet's workmanship, as different as can well be conceived from any thing that was done to his hand. But what is most worthy of remark, here, is, that he just inverts the relation between the incidents and the characterisation, using the former merely to support the latter, instead of being supported by it. Before, the persons served but as a sort of frame-work for the story; here, the story is made to serve but as canvas for the portraiture of character. So that, notwithstanding the large borrowings of incident and character, the play, as a whole, has eminently the stamp of an original work; and, which is more, an acquaintance with the sources drawn upon nowise diminishes our impression of its originality.

Before proceeding further, we must make some abatements from the indiscriminate praise which this drama has of late received. For criticism, in its natural and just reaction from the mechanical methods formerly in vogue, has run to the opposite extreme of unreserved special-pleading, and of hunting out of nature after reasons for unqualified approval; by which course it stultifies itself without really helping the subject. Now, we cannot deny, and care not to disguise, that in several places this play is sadly blemished with ingenious and elaborate affectations. We

refer not now to the conceits which Romeo indulges in so freely before his meeting with Juliet; for, in his then state of mind, such self centred and fantastical eddyings of thought may be not altogether without reason, as proceeding not from genuine passion, but rather from the want of it: he may be excused for playing with these little smoke-wreaths of fancy, forasmuch as the true flame is not yet kindled in his heart. But, surely, this excuse will not serve for those which are vented so profusely by the heroine even in her most impassioned moments; as, especially, in her dialogue with the Nurse in the second scene of Act iii. Yet Knight boldly justifies these, calling them "the results of strong emotion, seeking to relieve itself by a violent effort of the intellect, that the will may recover its balance." Which is either a piece of forced and far-fetched attorneyship, or else it is too deep for our comprehension. No. no! these things are plain disfigurements and blemishes, and criticism will best serve its proper end by calling them so. And if there be any sufficient apology for them, doubtless it is this, — That they grew from the general custom and conventional pressure of the time, and were written before the Poet had by practice and experience worked himself above these into the original strength and rectitude of his genius. And we submit, that any unsophisticated criticism, however broad and liberal, will naturally regard them as the effects of imitation, not of mental character, *because they are plainly out of keeping with the general style of the piece*, and *strike against the grain of the sentiment which that style inspires.*

Bating certain considerable drawbacks on this score, — and the fault disappears after Act iii., — the play gives the impression of having been all conceived and struck out in the full heat and glow of youthful passion; as if the Poet's genius were for the time thoroughly possessed with the spirit and temper of the subject, so that every thing becomes touched with its efficacy; — while at the same time the passion, though carried to the utmost intensity, is every where so pervaded with the light and grace of imagination, that it kindles but to ennoble and exalt. For richness of poetical colouring, — poured out with lavish hand indeed, but yet so managed as not to interfere either with the development of character or the proper dramatic effect, but rather to heighten them both, — it may challenge a comparison with any of the Poet's dramas.

It is this intense passion, acting through the imagination, that gives to the play its remarkable unity of effect. On this point, Coleridge has spoken with such rare felicity that his words ought always to go with the subject. "That law of unity," says he, "which has its foundations, not in the factitious necessity of custom, but in nature itself, the unity of feeling, is everywhere and at all times observed by Shakespeare in his plays. Read Romeo and Juliet: — all is youth and spring; — youth with its follies, its virtues, its precipitancies; — spring with its odours, its flowers

and its transiency;—it is one and the same feeling that commences, goes through, and ends the play. The old men, the Capulets and the Montagues, are not common old men; they have an eagerness, a heartiness, a vehemence, the effect of spring: with Romeo, his change of passion, his sudden marriage, and his rash death, are all the effects of youth;—whilst in Juliet love has all that is tender and melancholy in the nightingale, all that is voluptuous in the rose, with whatever is sweet in the freshness of spring; but it ends with a long deep sigh, like the last breeze of the Italian evening. This unity of feeling and character pervades every drama of Shakespeare."

In accordance with the principles here suggested, we find every thing on the run; all the passions of the drama are in the same fiery-footed and unmanageable excess: the impatient vehemence of old Capulet, the furious valour of Tybalt, the brilliant volubility of Mercutio, the petulant loquacity of the Nurse, being all but so many symptoms of the reigning irritability and impetuosity. Amid this general stress of impassioned life, old animosities are rekindled, old feuds have broken out anew; while the efforts of private friendship and public authority to quench the strife only go to prove it unquenchable, the same violent passions that have caused the tumults being brought to the suppression of them. The prevalence of extreme hate serves of course to generate the opposite extreme; out of the most passionate and fatal enmities there naturally springs a love as passionate and fatal. With dispositions too gentle and noble to share in the animosities so rife about them, the hearts of the lovers are but rendered thereby the more alive and open to impressions of a contrary nature; the fierce rancour of their houses only swelling in them the emotions that prevent their sympathising with it.

In this way, both the persons and the readers of the drama are prepared for the forthcoming issues: the leading passion, intense as it is, being so associated with others of equal intensity, that we receive it without any sense of disproportion to nature; whereas, if cut out of the harmony in which it exists, it would seem overwrought and incredible. Thus the Poet secures continuity of impression, and carries us smoothly along through all the aching joys and giddy transports of the lovers, by his manner of disposing the objects and persons about them. And he does this with so much ease as not to betray his exertions; his means are hidden in the skill with which he uses them; and we forget the height to which he soars, because he has the strength of wing to bear us along with him, or rather gives us wings to rise with him of ourselves.

Not the least considerable feature of this drama is, how, by divers little showings, we are let into the general condition of life where the scene is laid, and how this again is made to throw light on the main action. We see before us a most artificial and un-

nealthy state of society, where all the safety-valves of nature are closed up by an oppressive conventionality, and where the better passions, being clogged down to their source, have turned their strength into the worse; men's antipathies being the more violent, because no free play is given to their sympathies. Principle and impulse are often spoken of as opposed to each other; and, as men are, such is indeed too often the case: but in ingenuous natures and in well-ordered societies the two grow forth together, each serving to unfold and deepen the other, so that principle gets warmed into impulse, and impulse fixed into principle. When such is the case, the state of man is at peace and unity; otherwise, he is a house divided against itself, where principle and impulse strive each for the mastery, and sway by turns; headlong and sensual in his passions, cunning and selfish in his reason.

Now, this fatal divorce of reason and passion is strongly apparent in the condition of life here reflected. The generous impulses of nature are overborne and stifled by a discipline of selfishness. Coldly calculative where they ought to be impassioned, people are of course blindly passionate where they ought to be deliberate and cool. Even marriage is plainly stripped of its sacredness, made an affair of expediency, not of affection, insomuch that a previous union of hearts is discouraged, lest it should interfere with a prudent union of hands. So that we have a state of society, where the hearts of the young are, if possible, kept sealed against all deep and strong impressions, and the development of the nobler impulses foreclosed by the icy considerations of interest and policy.

Amidst this heart-withering refinement, the hero and the heroine stand out the unschooled and unspoiled creatures of native sense and sensibility. Art has tried its utmost upon them, but nature has proved too strong for it: in the silent creativeness of youth their feelings have insensibly matured themselves; and they come before us glowing with the warmth of natural sentiment, with susceptibilities deep as life, and waiting only for the kindling touch of passion. So that they exemplify the simplicity of nature thriving amidst the most artificial manners: nay, they are the more natural for the excess of art around them; as if nature, driven from the hearts of others, had taken refuge in theirs.

Principle, however, is as strong in them as passion; they have the purity as well as the impulsiveness of nature; and because they are free from immodest desires, they therefore put forth no angelic pretensions. Idolizing each other, they would, however, make none but permitted offerings. Not being led by the conventionalities of life, they therefore are not to be misled by them: as their hearts are joined in mutual love, so their hands must be joined in mutual honour; for, while loving each other with a love as boundless as the sea, they at the same time love in each other whatsoever is precious and heavenly in their unsoiled imaginations

Thus their fault lies not in the nature of their passion, but in its excess, — that they love each other in a degree that is due only to their Maker; but this is a natural reaction from that idolatry of interest and of self which pervades the rest of society, turning marriage into merchandise, and sacrificing the holiest instincts of nature to avarice, ambition, and pride.

The lovers, it is true, are not much given to reflection, because this is a thing that cannot come to them legitimately but by experience, which they are yet without. Life lies glittering with golden hopes before them, owing all its enchantment, perhaps, to distance: if their bliss seems perfect, it is only because their bounty is infinite; but such bounty and such bliss "may not with mortal man abide." Bereft of the new life they have found in each other, nothing remains for them but the bitter dregs from which the wine has all evaporated; and they dash to earth the stale and vapid draught, when it has lost all the spirit that caused it to foam and sparkle before them. Nevertheless, it is not their passion, but the enmity of their houses, that is punished in their death; and the awful lesson read in their fate is against that barbarism of civilization, which makes love excessive by trying to exclude it from its rightful place in life, and which subjects men to the just revenges of nature, because it puts them upon thwarting her noblest purposes. Were we deep in the ways of Providence, we might doubtless anticipate from the first, that these two beings, the pride and hope of their respective friends, would, even because themselves most innocent, fall a sacrifice to the guilt of their families; and that in and through their death would be punished and healed those fatal strifes and animosities which have made it at once so natural and so dangerous for them to love.

It has been aptly remarked, that the hero and heroine of this play, though in love, are not love-sick. Romeo, however, is something love-sick before his meeting with Juliet. His seeming love for Rosaline is but a matter of fancy, with which the heart has little or nothing to do. That the Poet so meant it, is plain from what is said about it in the Chorus at the end of Act i. Accordingly, it is airy, affected, and fantastical, causing him to think much of his feelings, to count over his sighs, and play with language, as a something rather generated from within than inspired from without: his thoughts are not so much on Rosaline or any thing he has found in her, as on a figment of his own mind, which he has baptised into her name and invested with her form. This is just the sort of love with which people often imagine themselves about to die, but which they always manage to survive, and that, without any further harm than the making them somewhat ridiculous. Romeo's love is a thing infinitely different. A mere idolater, Juliet converts him into a true worshipper; and the fire of his new passion burns up the old idol of his fancy. Love works a sort of regeneration upon him: his dreamy, sentimental

fancy giving place to a passion that interests him thoroughly in an external object, all his fine energies are forthwith tuned into harmony and eloquence, so that he becomes a true man, with every thing clear and healthy and earnest about him. As the Friar suggests, it was probably from an instinctive sense of his self-delusion, and that he made love by rote and not by heart, that Rosaline rejected his suit. The dream, though, has the effect of preparing him for the reality, while the contrast between them heightens our appreciation of the latter.

Hazlitt pronounces Romeo to be Hamlet in love; than which he could not well have made a greater mistake. In all that most truly constitutes character, the two, it seems to us, have nothing in common. To go no further, Hamlet is all procrastination, Romeo all precipitancy: the one reflects away the time of action, and loses the opportunity in getting ready for it; the other, pliant to impulse, and seizing the opportunity at once, or making it, acts first, and then reflects on what he has done, not on what he has to do. With Hamlet, it is a necessity of nature to think; with Romeo, to love: the former, studious of consequences, gets entangled with a multitude of conflicting passions and purposes; the latter, absorbed in one passion and one purpose, drives right ahead regardless of consequences. It is this necessity of loving that, until the proper object appears, creates in Romeo an object for itself: hence the love-bewilderment in which he first comes before us. Which explains and justifies the suddenness and vehemence of his passion, while the difference between this and his fancy-sickness amply vindicates him from the reproach of inconstancy

Being of passion all compact, Romeo of course does not generalize, nor give much heed to abstract truth: intelligent indeed of present objects and occasions, he does not, however, study to shape his feelings or conduct by any rules: he therefore sees no use of philosophy in his case, unless it can make a Juliet; nor does he care to hear others speak of what they do not feel. He has no life but passion, and passion lives altogether in and by its object: therefore it is that he dwells with such wild exaggeration on the sentence of banishment. Thus his love, by reason of its excess, exalting a subordinate into a sovereign good, defeats its own security and peace.

Yet there is a sort of instinctive rectitude in his passion, which makes us rather pity than blame its excess; and we feel that death comes upon him through it, not for it. We can scarce conceive any thing more full of manly sweetness and gentleness than his character. Love is the only thing wherein he seems to lack self-control, and this is the very thing wherein self-control is least a virtue. He will risk his life for a friend, but he will not do a mean thing to save it; has no pride and revenge to which he would sacrifice others, but has high and brave affections to which he will not shrink from sacrificing himself. Thus even in his resentments he

is in noble contrast with those about him. His heart is so pre-occupied with generous thought as to afford no room for those furious transports which prove so fatal in others: where their swords jump in wild fury from their scabbards, his sleeps quietly by his side; but then, as he is very hard to provoke, so is he very dangerous when provoked.

Mr. Hallam — a man who weighs his words well before pronouncing them — gives as his opinion, that "it is impossible to place Juliet among the great female characters of Shakespeare's creation." Other critics of high esteem, especially Mrs. Jameson, take a different view; but this may result, in part, from the representation being so charged, not to say overcharged, with poetic warmth and brilliancy, as to hinder a cool and steady judgment of the character. For the passion in which Juliet lives is most potently infectious; one can scarce venture near enough to see what and whence it is, without falling under its influence; while in her case it is so fraught with purity and tenderness, and self forgetting ardour and constancy, and has so much, withal, that challenges a respectful pity, that the moral sense does not easily find where to fix its notes of reproof. And if in her intoxication of soul and sense she loses whatsoever of reason her youth and inexperience can have gathered, the effect is breathed forth with an energy and elevation of spirit, and in a transporting affluence of thought and imagery, which none but the sternest readers can well resist, and which, after all, there may not be much virtue in resisting.

We have to confess, however, that Juliet appears something better as a heroine than as a woman, the reverse of which commonly holds in the Poet's delineations. But she is a real heroine, in the best sense of the term; her womanhood being developed through her heroism, not eclipsed or obscured by it. Wherein she differs from the general run of tragic heroines, who act as if they knew not how to be heroic, without unsexing themselves, and becoming something mannish or viraginous: the trouble with them being, that they set out with a special purpose to be heroines, and study to approve themselves such; whereas Juliet is surprised into heroism, and acts the heroine without knowing it, simply because it is in her to do so, and, when the occasion comes, she cannot do otherwise.

It is not till the marriage with Paris is forced upon her, that the proper heroism of her nature displays itself. All her feelings as a woman, a lover, and a wife, are then thoroughly engaged; and because her heart is all truth, therefore she cannot but choose rather to die "an unstain'd wife to her sweet love," than to live on any other terms. To avert what is to her literally an *infinite* evil, she appeals imploringly to her father, her mother, and the Nurse, in succession; nor is it till she is cast entirely on her own strength that she finds herself sufficient for herself. There is

something truly fearful in the resolution and energy of her discourse with the Friar; yet we feel that she is still the same soft, tender, gentle being whose breath was lately so rich and sweet with words of love. When told the desperate nature of the remedy, she rises to a yet higher pitch, her very terror of the deed inspiring her with fresh energy of purpose. And when she comes to the performance, she cannot indeed arrest the workings of her imagination, neither can those workings shake her resolutions on the contrary, in their reciprocal action each adds vigour and intensity to the other, the terrific images which throng upon her excited fancy developing within her a strength and courage to face them. In all which there is certainly much of the heroine, but then the heroism is the free, spontaneous, unreflecting outcome of her native womanhood.

It is well worth noting, with what truth to nature the different qualities of the female character are in this representation distributed. Juliet has both the weakness and the strength of woman, and she has them in the right, that is, the natural places. For, if she appears as frail as the frailest of her sex in the process of becoming a lover, her frailty ends with that process: weak in yielding to the first touch of passion, all her strength of character comes out in courage and constancy afterwards. Thus it is in the cause of the wife that the greatness proper to her as a woman transpires. Moore, in his Life of Byron, speaks of this as a peculiarity of the Italian women; but surely it is nowise peculiar to them, save that they may have it in a larger measure than others. For, if we mistake not, the general rule of women everywhere is, that the easiest to fall in love are the hardest to get out of it, and at the same time the most religiously tenacious of their honour in it.

It is very considerable that Juliet, though subject to the same necessity of loving as Romeo, is nevertheless quite exempt from the delusions of fancy, and therefore never gets bewildered with a love of her own making. The elements of passion in her do not, it is against her nature that they should, act in such a way as to send her in quest of an object: indeed they are a secret even to herself, she suspects not their existence, till the proper object appears, because it is the inspiration of that object that kindles them into effect. — Her modesty, too, is much like Romeo's honour; that is, it is a living attribute of her character, and not merely a form impressed upon her manners from without. She therefore does not try to conceal or disguise from herself the impulses of her nature, because she justly regards them as sanctified by the religion of her heart. On this point, especially with reference to her famous soliloquy at the beginning of the second scene in Act iii., we leave her in the hands of Mrs. Jameson; who, with a rare gift to see what is right, joins an equal felicity in expressing what she sees. "Let it be remembered," says she, "that in this speech

Juliet is not supposed to be addressing an audience, nor even a confidante; and I confess I have been shocked at the utter want of taste and refinement in those who, with coarse derision, or in a spirit of prudery yet more gross and perverse, have dared to comment on this beautiful 'Hymn to the Night,' breathed out by Juliet in the silence and solitude of her chamber. She is thinking aloud; it is the young heart 'triumphing to itself in words.' In the midst of all the vehemence with which she calls upon the night to bring Romeo to her arms, there is something so almost infantine in her perfect simplicity, so playful and fantastic in the imagery and language, that the charm of sentiment and innocence is thrown over the whole; and her impatience, to use her own expression, is truly that of 'a child before a festival, that hath new robes and may not wear them.'"

The Nurse is in some respects another edition of Mrs. Quickly, though in a different binding. The character has a tone of reality that almost startles us on a first acquaintance. She gives the impression of a literal transcript from actual life; which is doubtless owing in part to the predominance of memory in her mind, causing her to think and speak of things just as they occurred; as in her account of Juliet's age, where she cannot go on without bringing in all the accidents and impertinences which stand associated with the subject. And she has a way of repeating the same thing in the same words, so that it strikes us as a fact cleaving to her thoughts, and exercising a sort of fascination over them: it seems scarce possible that any but a real person should be so enslaved to actual events.

This general passiveness to what is going on about her naturally makes her whole character "smell of the shop." And she has a certain vulgarized air of rank and refinement, as if, priding herself on the confidence of her superiors, she had caught and assimilated their manners to her own vulgar nature. In this mixture of refinement and vulgarity, both elements are made the worse for being together; for, like all those who ape their betters, she exaggerates whatever she copies; or, borrowing the proprieties of those above her, she turns them into their opposite, because she has no *sense* of propriety. Without a particle of truth, or honour, or delicacy; one to whom life has no sacredness, virtue no beauty, love no holiness; a woman, in short, without womanhood; she abounds, however, in serviceable qualities; has just that low servile prudence which at once fits her to be an instrument, and makes her proud to be used as such. Yet she acts not so much from a positive disregard of right as from a lethargy of conscience; or as if her soul had run itself into a sort of moral dry-rot through a leak at the mouth.

Accordingly, in her basest acts she never dreams but that she is a pattern of virtue. And because she is thus unconscious and, as it were, innocent of her own vices, therefore Juliet thinks her

free from them, and suspects not but that beneath her petulant, vulgar loquacity she has a vein of womanly honour and sensibility For she has, in her way, a real affection for Juliet; whatsoever would give pleasure to herself, that she will do any thing to compass for her young mistress; and, until love and marriage become the question, there has never been any thing to disclose the essential oppugnancy of their natures. When, however, in her noble agony, Juliet appeals to the Nurse for counsel, and is met with the advice to marry Paris, she sees at once what her soul is made of; that her former praises of Romeo were but the offspring of a sensual pruriency easing itself with talk; that in her long life she has gained only that sort of experience which works the debasement of its possessor; and that she knows less than nothing of love and marriage, because she has worn their prerogatives without any feeling of their sacredness.

Mercutio is one of the instances which strikingly show the excess of Shakespeare's powers above his performances. Though giving us more than any other man, he still seems to have given but a small part of himself; for we see not but he could have gone on indefinitely revelling in the same "exquisite ebullience and overflow" of life and wit which he has started in Mercutio. As seeking rather to instruct us with character than to entertain us with talk, he lets off just enough of the latter to disclose the former, and then stops, leaving the impression of an inexhaustible abundance withheld to give scope for something better. From the nature of the subject, he had to leave unsatisfied the desire which in Mercutio is excited. Delightful as Mercutio is, the Poet valued and makes us value his room more than his company. It has been said that he was obliged to kill Mercutio, lest Mercutio should kill him. And certainly it is not easy to see how he could have kept Mercutio and Tybalt in the play without spoiling it, nor how he could have kept them out of it without killing them: for, so long as they live, they seem bound to have a chief hand in whatsoever is going on about them; and they cannot well have a hand in any thing without turning it, the one into a comedy, the other into a butchery. The Poet, however, so manages them and their fate as to aid rather than interrupt the proper interest of the piece; the impression of their death, strong as it is, being overcome by the sympathy awakened in us with the living.

Mercutio is a perfect embodiment of animal spirits acting in and through the brain. So long as the life is in him his blood must dance, and so long as the blood dances the brain and tongue must play. His veins seem filled with sparkling champagne. Always revelling in the conscious fulness of his resources, he pours out and pours out, heedless whether he speaks sense or nonsense, nay, his very stumblings seem designed as triumphs of agility; he studies, apparently, for failures, as giving occasion for further trials, and thus serving at once to provoke his skill and to set it

off. Full of the most companionable qualities, he often talks loosely indeed, but not profanely; and even in his loosest talk there is a subtilty and refinement both of nature and of breeding, that mark him for the prince of good fellows. Nothing could more finely evince the essential frolicsomeness of his composition, than that, with his ruling passion strong in death, he should play the wag in the face of his grim enemy, as if to live and to jest were the same thing with him.

Of Mercutio's wit it were vain to attempt an analysis. From a fancy as quick and aerial as the Aurora Borealis, the most unique and graceful combinations come forth with almost inconceivable facility and felicity. His wit consists in a peculiar briskness, airiness, and apprehensiveness of spirit, catching, as by instinct, the most remote and delicate affinities, and putting things together most unexpectedly and at the same time most appropriately, it can hardly be denied that Mercutio is the prince of wits, as well as of good fellows.

We have always felt a special comfort in the part of Friar Laurence. How finely his tranquillity contrasts with the surrounding agitation! And how natural it seems that he should draw lessons of tranquillity from that very agitation! Calm, thoughtful, benevolent, withdrawing from the world, that he may benefit society the more for being out of it, his presence and counsel in the play are as oil poured, yet poured in vain, on troubled waters. Sympathising quietly yet deeply with the very feelings in others which in the stillness of thought he has subdued in himself, the storms that waste society only kindle in him the sentiments that raise him above them; while his voice, issuing from the heart of humanity, speaks peace, but cannot give it, to the passions that are raging around him.

Schlegel has remarked with his usual discernment on the skill with which the Poet manages to alleviate the miracle of the sleeping-potion; and how, by throwing an air of mysterious wisdom round the Friar, he renders us the more apt to believe strange things concerning him; representing him as so conjunctive and private with nature, that incredulity touching what he does is in a great measure forestalled by impressions of reverence for his character. "How," says he, "does the Poet dispose us to believe that Father Laurence possesses such a secret? He exhibits him at first in a garden, collecting herbs, and descanting on their wonderful virtues. The discourse of the pious old man is full of deep meaning: he sees everywhere in nature emblems of the moral world; the same wisdom with which he looks through her has also made him master of the human heart. In this way, what would else have an ungrateful appearance, becomes the source of a great beauty."

Much fault has been found with the winding-up of this play, that it does not stop with the death of Juliet. Looking merely to the

uses of the stage, it might indeed be better so; but Shakespeare wrote for humanity as well as, yea, rather than, for the stage. And as the evil fate of the lovers springs from the bitter feud of their houses and from a general stifling of nature under a hard crust of artificial manners, he wisely represents it as reacting upon and removing the cause. We are thus given to see and feel that they have not suffered in vain; and the heart has something to mitigate and humanise its over-pressure of grief. The absorbing, devouring selfishness of society generates the fiercest rancour between its leading families, and that rancour issues in the death of the very members through whom they had thought most to advance their rival pretensions; earth's best and noblest creatures are snatched away, because, by reason of their virtue, they can best afford to die, and because, for the same reason, their death will be most bitterly deplored. The good old Friar indeed thought that by the marriage of the lovers the rancour of their houses would be healed. But a Wiser than he knew that the deepest touch of sorrow was required to awe and melt their proud, selfish hearts; that nothing short of the most afflicting bereavement, together with the feeling that themselves had both caused it and deserved it, could teach them rightly to "prize the breath they share with human kind," and remand them to the impassioned attachments of nature. Accordingly, the hatred that seemed immortal is buried in the tomb of the faithful lovers; families are reconciled, society renovated, by the storm that has passed upon them; the tyranny of selfish custom is rebuked and broken up by the insurrection of nature which itself has provoked; tears flow, hearts are softened hands joined, truth, tenderness, and piety inspired, by the noble example of devotion and self-sacrifice which stands before them. Such is the sad but wholesome lesson to be gathered from the heart-rending story of "Juliet and her Romeo."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Escalus, Prince of Verona.
Paris, a young Nobleman. his Kinsman.
Montague, } Heads of two hostile Houses.
Capulet, }
An old Man, Uncle to Capulet.
Romeo, Son to Montague.
Mercutio, Kinsman to Escalus, } Friends to Romeo.
Benvolio, Nephew to Montague, }
Tybalt, Nephew to Lady Capulet.
Friar Laurence, a Franciscan.
Friar John, of the same Order.
Balthazar, Servant to Romeo.
Sampson, } Servants to Capulet.
Gregory, }
Peter, another Servant to Capulet.
Abram, Servant to Montague.
An Apothecary.
Three Musicians.
Chorus. A Boy, Page to Paris An Officer.

Lady Montague, Wife to Montague.
Lady Capulet, Wife to Capulet.
Juliet, Daughter to Capulet.
Nurse to Juliet.

Citizens of Verona; male and female Relations to both Houses; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, during the greater Part of the Play, in Verona; once, in the fifth Act, at Mantua.

THE TRAGEDY

OF

ROMEO AND JULIET.

PROLOGUE.[1]

Chorus. Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Do, with their death, bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

[1] This Prologue is in all the quartos, though with considerable variations in that of 1597. It was omitted in the folio, for reasons unknown. The old copies represent it as spoken by *Chorus*; which means, no doubt, that it fell to the same performer as the Chorus at the end of Act i. H.

ACT I.

SCENE I. A public Place.

Enter SAMPSON *and* GREGORY, *armed with Swords and Bucklers.*

Sam. GREGORY, o'my word, we'll not carry coals.[1]

Gre. No, for then we should be colliers.

Sam. I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

Gre. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o'the collar.

Sam. I strike quickly, being mov'd.

Gre. But thou art not quickly mov'd to strike.

Sam. A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

Gre. To move is to stir, and to be valiant is to stand; therefore, if thou art mov'd, thou runn'st away.

Sam. A dog of that house shall move me to stand. I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

Gre. That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

Sam. True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall:—there-

[1] To *carry coals* is *to put up with insults.* Anciently, in great families, the scullions, turnspits, and carriers of wood and coals were esteemed the very lowest of menials. Such attendants upon the royal household, in progresses, were called the *black-guard;* and hence the origin of that term. Thus in May Day, a Comedy by Chapman, 1608: "You must swear by no man's beard but your own; for that may breed a quarrel: above all things, you must *carry no coals.*" And in Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour: "Here comes one that will *carry coals*, ergo will hold my dog." See King Henry V., Act iii. sc. 2, note 7.

fore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

Gre. The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.

Sam. 'Tis all one; I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids;[2] I will cut off their heads.

Gre. The heads of the maids?

Sam. Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maid enheads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

Gre. They must take it in sense, that feel it.

Sam. Me they shall feel, while I am able to stand; and 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

Gre. 'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John.[3] Draw thy tool; here comes two of the house of the Montagues.[4]

Enter ABRAM *and* BALTHAZAR.

Sam. My naked weapon is out: quarrel, I will back thee.

Gre. How! turn thy back, and run?

Sam. Fear me not.

Gre. No, marry: I fear thee!

Sam. Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

Gre. I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

[2] Such is the reading of the undated quarto; all the other old copies have *civil* instead of *cruel*. H.

[3] *Poor John* is *hake*, dried and salted.

[4] It should be observed that the partisans of the Montague family wore a token in their hats in order to distinguish them from their enemies the Capulets. Hence throughout this play they are known at a distance. Gascoigne adverts to this in a Masque written for Viscount Montacute, in 1575:

"And for a further proofe, he shewed in hys hat
Thys token, which the *Montacutes* did beare always, for that
They covet to be knowne from *Capels*"

Sam. Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.[5]

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. Is the law of our side, if I say, ay?

Gre. No.

Sam. No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

Gre. Do you quarrel, sir?

Abr. Quarrel, sir? no, sir.

Sam. If you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO, *at a distance.*

Gre. Say, better: here comes one of my master's kinsmen.[6]

Sam. Yes, better, sir.

Abr. You lie.

Sam. Draw, if you be men. — Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.[7] [*They fight*

[5] This was a common mode of insult, in order to begin a quarrel. Dekker, in his Dead Term, 1608, describing the various groups that daily frequented St. Paul's, says, "What swearing is there, what shouldering, what justling, what jeering, what *byting of thumbs*, to beget quarrels!" And Lodge, in his Wits Miserie 1596: "Behold, next I see Contempt marching forth, giving me the *fico with his thumbe in his mouthe*." The mode in which this contemptuous action was performed is thus described by Cotgrave: "Faire la nique: to mocke by nodding or lifting up of the chinne; or, more properly, to threaten or defie, by putting the thumbe nail into the mouth, and with a jerke (from the upper teeth) make it to knacke."

[6] Gregory is a servant of the Capulets: he must therefore mean Tybalt, who enters immediately after Benvolio.

[7] All the old copies except the undated quarto have *washing*

Ben. Part, fools! put up your swords; you know not what you do. [*Beats down their swords.*

Enter TYBALT.

Tyb. What! art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?
Turn thee, Benvolio; look upon thy death.

Ben. I do but keep the peace: put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

Tyb. What! drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee.
Have at thee, coward. [*They fight.*

Enter several Partisans of both Houses, who join the Fray; then enter Citizens, with Clubs.

1 *Cit.* Clubs, bills, and partizans![8] strike! beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

instead of *swashing*. The latter is undoubtedly the right word. Ben Jonson, in his Staple of News, has the phrase *swashing blow*. Baret, in his Alvearie, 1580, says that "to *swash* is to make a noise with swords against targets." See As You Like It, Act i. sc. 3, note 8. H.

[8] The old custom of crying out, Clubs, clubs! in case of any tumult occurring in the streets of London, has been made familiar to most readers by Scott in The Fortunes of Nigel. See As You Like It, Act v. sc. 2, note 3. — *Bills* and *partizans* were weapons used by watchmen and foresters. See As You Like It, Act i. sc. 2, note 5. — This transferring of London customs to an Italian city is thus justified by Knight: "The use by Shakespeare of some phrases, in the mouths of foreign characters, was a part of his art. It is the same thing as rendering Sancho's Spanish proverbs into the corresponding English proverbs, instead of literally translating them. The cry of clubs by the citizens of Verona expressed an idea of popular movement, which could not have been conveyed half so emphatically in a foreign phrase." H.

Enter CAPULET, *in his Gown; and Lady* CAPULET.

Cap. What noise is this? — Give me my long sword, ho![9]

Lady C. A crutch, a crutch! — Why call you for a sword?

Cap. My sword, I say! — Old Montague is come,
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

Enter MONTAGUE *and Lady* MONTAGUE.

Mon. Thou villain Capulet! — Hold me not; let me go.

Lady M. Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Enter the Prince, with Attendants.

Prin. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel, —
Will they not hear! — what ho! you men, you beasts,
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince. —
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets;
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partizans, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate.

[9] The *long sword* was used in active warfare; a lighter, shorter and less desperate weapon was worn for ornament.

If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our further pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.[10]
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt all but* MONTAGUE, *Lady* MONTAGUE, *and* BENVOLIO.

Mon. Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?—
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began.

Ben. Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:
I drew to part them; in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd;
Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn.
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

[10] In Brooke's poem *Free-town* is the name of a castle belonging to Capulet.—Upon the foregoing part of this scene Coleridge has the following: "With his accustomed judgment, Shakespeare has begun by placing before us a lively picture of all the impulses of the play; and, as nature ever presents two sides, one for Heraclitus, and one for Democritus, he has, by way of prelude, shown the laughable absurdity of the evil by the contagion of it reaching the servants, who have so little to do with it, but who are under the necessity of letting the superfluity of sensoreal power fly off through the escape-valve of wit-combats, and of quarrelling with weapons of sharper edge, all in humble imitation of their masters. Yet there is a sort of unhired fidelity, an *ourishness* about all this, that makes it rest pleasant on one's feelings. All the first scene, down to the conclusion of the Prince's speech, is a motley dance of all ranks and ages to one tune, as if the horn of Huon had been playing behind the scenes." B.

Lady M. O! where is Romeo? — saw you him to-day?
Right glad I am he was not at this fray.
Ben. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,
A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;
Where, underneath the grove of sycamore
That westward rooteth from the city's side,
So early walking did I see your son.
Towards him I made; but he was 'ware of me,
And stole into the covert of the wood:
I, measuring his affections by my own, —
Which then most sought, where most might not be found,
Being one too many by my weary self,[11] —
Pursued my humour, not pursuing his,
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.
Mon. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself;
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
And makes himself an artificial night.
Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.
Ben. My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

[11] The meaning evidently is, that his disposition was, to be in solitude, as he could hardly endure even so much company as that of himself. Instead of this and the preceding line, the quarto of 1597 merely has one line, thus: "That most are busied when they're most alone;" which reading has been strangely preferred by some modern editors. H.

Mon. I neither know it, nor can learn of him.

Ben. Have you importun'd him by any means?

Mon. Both by myself, and many other friends:
But he, his own affections' counsellor,
Is to himself — I will not say, how true —
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.[12]
Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
We would as willingly give cure, as know.

Enter ROMEO, *at a distance.*

Ben. See, where he comes: So please you, step aside;
I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.

Mon. I would, thou wert so happy by thy stay,
To hear true shrift. — Come, madam, let's away.

[*Exeunt* MONTAGUE *and Lady.*

Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Rom. Is the day so young?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ah me! sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?

Ben. It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

Rom. Not having that, which, having, makes them short.

Ben. In love?

[12] The old copies have *same* instead of *sun*, or *sunne*, as it was formerly written. The happy emendation was made by Theobald, and is sustained by a passage in Daniel's Sonnets, 1594:

"And whilst thou *spread'st* unto the rising *sunne*
The fairest *flower* that ever saw the light." H.

Rom. Out.

Ben. Of love?

Rom. Out of her favour, where I am in love.

Ben. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

Rom. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will![13]
Where shall we dine? — O me! what fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love: —
Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Misshapen chaos of well seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is! —
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?[14]

Ben. No, coz, I rather weep.

Rom. Good heart, at what?

Ben. At thy good heart's oppression.

Rom. Why, such is love's transgression. —
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it press'd

[13] That is, should *blindly* and recklessly think he can surmount all obstacles to his will.

[14] This string of antithetical conceits seems absurd enough to us; but such was the most approved way of describing love in Shakespeare's time, and for some ages before. Petrarch and Chaucer used it, and divers old English poets and ballad-makers abound in it. Perhaps the best defence of the use here made of it is, that such an affected way of speaking not unaptly shows the state of Romeo's mind, that his love is rather self-generated than inspired by any object. At all events, as compared with his style of speech after meeting with Juliet, it serves to mark the difference between *being love-sick* and *being in love*. H.

With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;
Being purg'd,[15] a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz. [*Going.*

Ben. Soft! I will go along:
An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

Rom. Tut! I have lost myself; I am not here:
This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

Ben. Tell me in sadness, who is that you love.

Rom. What! shall I groan, and tell thee?

Ben. Groan! why, no;
But sadly tell me who.

Rom. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will;
A word ill urg'd to one that is so ill!
In sadness,[16] cousin, I do love a woman.

Ben. I aim'd so near, when I suppos'd you lov'd.

Rom. A right good marks-man! — And she's fair I love.

Ben. A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

[15] Such is the reading of the old copies. Divers modern editions, following Dr. Johnson, change *purg'd* to *urg'd*. The change is a good one, if any change were needed. Of course, *purg'd* is *purified*. Mr. Collier's celebrated second folio substitutes *puff'd*. — As Romeo here resumes his strain of conceits, it may be well to quote one or two precedents for it. Thus Watson, in one of his canzonets:

> "Love is a sowre delight, and sugred griefe,
> A living death, and ever-dying life."

And Turberville makes Reason harangue against love thus:

> "A fierie frost, a flame that frozen is with ise;
> A heavie burden light to beare; a vertue fraught with vice."
>
> H.

[16] *In sadness* is *gravely*, in *seriousness*.

Rom. Well, in that hit, you miss: she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow: she hath Dian's wit;
And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,
From love's weak childish bow she lives encharm'd.[17]
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide th' encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:
O! she is rich in beauty; only poor,
That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.[18]

Ben. Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?

Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;
For beauty, starv'd with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
She is too fair, too wise; wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair:
She hath forsworn to love; and in that vow
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

Ben. Be rul'd by me; forget to think of her.

Rom. O! teach me how I should forget to think

Ben. By giving liberty unto thine eyes:
Examine other beauties.

Rom. 'Tis the way
To call hers, exquisite, in question more.[19]
These happy masks[20] that kiss fair ladies' brows,

[17] The first quarto and the folio read *uncharmed*, which gives a sense just the opposite of that required. Since the time of Rowe, the uniform reading has been *unharm'd*. *Encharm'd* is taken from Mr. Collier's second folio. For this use of *charm* see Cymbeline, Act v. sc. 3, note 5. H.

[18] She is poor only, because she leaves no part of her store behind her, as with her all beauty will die.

[19] That is, to call her exquisite beauty more into my mind, and make it more the subject of conversation. *Question* was often used in this sense.

[20] This is probably an allusion to the *masks* worn by the female

Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair:
He that is stricken blind cannot forget
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost.
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.[21]

Ben. I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II. A Street.

Enter CAPULET, PARIS, *and a Servant.*

Cap. But Montague is bound as well as I,
In penalty alike; and 'tis not hard, I think,
For men so old as we to keep the peace.

Par. Of honourable reckoning are you both;
And pity 'tis you liv'd at odds so long.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

Cap. But saying o'er what I have said before:
My child is yet a stranger in the world;
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years:

spectators of the play; unless we suppose that *these* means no more than *the*. See Measure for Measure, Act iii. sc. 4, note 11.

[21] If we are right, from the internal evidence, in pronouncing this one of Shakespeare's early dramas, it affords a strong instance of the fineness of his insight into the nature of the passions, that Romeo is introduced already love-bewildered. The necessity of loving creates an object for itself in man and woman; and yet there is a difference in this respect between the sexes, though only to be known by a perception of it. It would have displeased us if Juliet had been represented as already in love, or as fancying herself so: but no one, I believe, ever experiences any shock at Romeo's forgetting his Rosaline, who had been a mere name for the yearning of his youthful imagination, and rushing into his passion for Juliet. Rosaline was a mere creation of his fancy; and we should remark the boastful positiveness of Romeo in a love of his own making, which is never shown where love is really near the heart. — COLERIDGE. H.

Let two more summers wither in their pride,
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. And too soon marr'd are those so early married.[1]

Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she,
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:[2]
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love, and you among the store;
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house, look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light:
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel[3]
When well-apparell'd April on the heel
Of limping winter treads, even such delight

[1] So reads the quarto of 1597: all the other old copies have *made* instead of *married*. There can be little doubt that *married* is right. Puttenham, in his Art of Poesy, quotes the expression as proverbial: "The maid that soon *married* soon *married* is." H.

[2] *Fille de terre* is the old French phrase for an *heiress*. *Earth* is put for *lands*, or *landed estate*, in other old plays.

[3] Johnson would read *yeomen* instead of *young men*. Others think *young men* to be here used for *yeomen*, as it sometimes is by old writers. The meaning in that case would be, such comfort as farmers have at the coming of spring. But there seems to be no cause for either supposition. What feelings the young are apt to have in the spring, can hardly need explaining, to those who remember their youth. However, the Poet's 98th Sonnet yields a good comment on the text:

"From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him." H.

Among fresh female buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house :[4] hear all, all see,
And like her most, whose merit most shall be:
Which, on more view of many, mine being one,
May stand in number, though in reckoning none.[5]
Come, go with me. — Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out,
Whose names are written there, [*Gives a Paper.*] and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET *and* PARIS.

Serv. Find them out, whose names are written here?[6] It is written, that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard, and the tailor with his last; the fisher with his pencil, and the painter with his nets: but I am sent to find those persons, whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must to the learned: — In good time

Enter BENVOLIO *and* ROMEO.

Ben. Tut, man! one fire burns out another's burning,

[4] To *inherit*, in the language of Shakespeare, is to *possess*.

[5] *Which* is here used for *who*, referring to *her*. The usage was common, as the Bible will show. — By a perverse adherence to the quarto of 1597, which reads, "*Such amongst* view of many," this passage has been made unintelligible. The quarto of 1599 reads as in the text; evidently meaning, "Hear all, see all, and like her most who has the most merit; *her*, which, after regarding attentively the many, my daughter being one, may stand *unique* in merit, though she may be reckoned nothing, or held in no estimation." The allusion, as Malone has shown, is to the old proverbial expression, "*One* is no number.' Thus in Shakespeare's 136th Sonnet:

"Among a number *one is reckon'd none;*
Then, in the number let me pass untold."

[6] The quarto of 1597 adds, "And yet I know not who are written here; I must to the learned to learn of them: that's as much as to say, the tailor," &c.

One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish.
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

Rom. Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.[7]

Ben. For what, I pray thee?

Rom. For your broken shin.

Ben. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Rom. Not mad, but bound more than a madman is:
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd, and tormented, and — Good-den, good fellow.

Serv. God gi' good den. — I pray, sir, can you read?

Rom. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Serv. Perhaps you have learn'd it without book; but, I pray, can you read any thing you see?

Rom. Ay, if I know the letters, and the language.

Serv. Ye say honestly: Rest you merry!

Rom. Stay, fellow; I can read.

[*Reads.*] Signior Martino, and his wife and daughters, County Anselme, and his beauteous sisters; The lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio, and his lovely nieces; Mercutio, and his brother Valentine; Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters; My fair niece Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio, and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio, and the lively Helena.

A fair assembly! whither should they come?

[7] The *plantain leaf* is a blood-stancher, and was formerly applied to green wounds. See Love's Labour's Lost, Act iii. sc. 1, note 10. So in Albumazar:

> "Help, Armellina, help! I'm fallen i'the cellar:
> Bring a fresh *plantain-leaf*, I've broke my shin.

Serv. Up

Rom. Whither?

Serv. To our house: to supper.

Rom. Whose house?

Serv. My master's.

Rom. Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

Serv. Now I'll tell you without asking: My master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine.[8] Rest you merry. [*Exit.*

Ben. At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Sups the fair Rosaline, whom thou so lov'st,
With all the admired beauties of Verona:
Go thither; and, with unattainted eye,
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

Rom. When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires!
And these, — who, often drown'd, could never die, —
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match, since first the world begun.

Ben. Tut! you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself pois'd with herself in either eye:
But, in that crystal scales,[9] let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love[10] against some other maid
That I will show you, shining at this feast,
And she shall scant show well, that now shows best.

[8] This expression often occurs in old plays. We have one stil in use of similar import: "To *crack* a bottle."

[9] So in all the old copies. Rowe changed *that* to *those*, and is followed in modern editions, except Knight's. *Scales* is here used in the singular number; that's all. H.

[10] Heath says, "*Your lady's love* is *the love you bear to your lady*, which, in our language, is commonly used for the lady herself." Perhaps we should read, "Your *lady-love*."

Rom. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [*Exeunt*

SCENE III. A Room in CAPULET'S House

Enter Lady CAPULET *and the Nurse.*

Lady C. Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth to me.

Nurse. Now, by my maidenhead at twelve year old,
I bade her come. — What, lamb! what, lady-bird! —
God forbid! — where's this girl? — what, Juliet!

Enter JULIET.

Jul. How now! who calls?

Nurse. Your mother.

Jul. Madam, I am here: What is your will?

Lady C. This is the matter. — Nurse, give leave awhile;
We must talk in secret. — Nurse, come back again:
I have remember'd me, thou shalt hear our counsel.
Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse. 'Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

Lady C. She's not fourteen.

Nurse. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,
And yet, to my teen[1] be it spoken, I have but four

[1] *Teen* is an old word for *sorrow*, and is here used as a sort of play upon *four* and *fourteen*. — In the old copies the speeches of the Nurse in this scene are printed as prose. Capell has the great merit of arranging them into verse. — "The character of the Nurse," says Coleridge, "is the nearest of any thing in Shakespeare to a direct borrowing from mere observation; and the reason is, that as in infancy and childhood the individual in nature is a representative of a class, — just as in describing one larch tree you generalise a grove of them, — so it is nearly as much so in old age The generalisation is done to the Poet's hand. Here you have

She is not fourteen. How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

Lady C. A fortnight, and odd days.

Nurse. Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she — God rest all Christian souls! —
Were of an age. — Well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me. But, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry: I remember it well.
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;
And she was wean'd, — I never shall forget it, —
Of all the days of the year, upon that day;
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall:
My ord and you were then at Mantua. —
Nay, I do bear a brain:[2] — but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug!
Shake, quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow
To bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years;
For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about;
For, even the day before, she broke her brow:

the garrulity of age strengthened by the feelings of a long-trusted servant, whose sympathy with the mother's affections gives her privileges and rank in the household. And observe the mode of connection by accident of time and place, and the childlike fondness of repetition in a second childhood, and also that happy, humble ducking under, yet constant resurgence against, the check of her superiors." H.

[2] The nurse means to boast of her retentive faculty. To *bear a brain* was to possess much mental capacity. Thus in Marston's Dutch Courtezan: "My silly husband, alas! knows nothing of it; 'tis I that must *beare a braine* for all."

And then my husband — God be with his soul!
'A was a merry man — took up the child:
"Yea," quoth he, "dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou hast more wit,
Wilt thou not, Jule?" and, by my holy-dam,
The pretty wretch left crying, and said, "Ay."
To see, now, how a jest shall come about!
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it: "Wilt thou not, Jule?"
quoth he;
And, pretty fool, it stinted,[3] and said, "Ay."

Lady C. Enough of this: I pray thee, hold thy peace.

Nurse. Yes, madam: Yet I cannot choose but laugh,
To think it should leave crying, and say, "Ay:"
And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow
A bump as big as a young cockrel's stone,
A perilous knock; and it cried bitterly.
"Yea," quoth my husband, "fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou com'st to age;
Wilt thou not, Jule?" it stinted, and said, "Ay."

Jul. And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

Nurse. Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd:
An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

Lady C. Marry, that marry is the very theme
I came to talk of. — Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married?

[3] To *stint* is to *stop*. Baret translates "Lachrymas supprimere, to *stinte* weeping;" and "to *stinte* talke," by "sermones restinguere." So Ben Jonson in Cynthia's Revels: "*Stint* thy babbling tongue, fond Echo."

Jul. It is an honour that I dream not of.

Nurse. An honour! were not I thine only nurse, I would say thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

Lady C. Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers: by my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus, then, in brief:
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse. A man, young lady! lady, such a man,
As all the world — Why, he's a man of wax.[4]

Lady C. Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

Nurse. Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

Lady C. What say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast:
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament,[5]
And see how one another lends content;
And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,
Find written in the margin of his eyes.[6]

[4] That is, as well made as if he had been modelled in wax. So in Wily Beguiled: "Why, he is a man as one should picture him in *wax*." So Horace uses "*Cerea* brachia," *waxen* arms, for arms wel. shaped.

[5] Thus the quarto of 1599. The quarto of 1609 and the folio read, "every *several* lineament." We have, "The unity and *married* calm of states," in Troilus and Cressida. And in his eighth Sonnet:

> "If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
> By unions *married*, do offend thine ear."

[6] The comments on ancient books were generally printed in the *margin*. Horatio says, in Hamlet, "I knew you must e edified by the *margent*." So in the Rape of Lucrece:

> "But she that never cop'd with stranger *eyes*
> Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,

This precious book of love, this unbound lover
To beautify him, only lacks a cover.
The fish lives in the sea;[7] and 'tis much pride,
For fair without the fair within to hide:
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse. No less? nay, bigger: women grow by men.

Lady C. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris love?

Jul. I'll look to like, if looking liking move:
But no more deep will I endart mine eye,[8]
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the guests are come, supper serv'd up, you call'd, my young lady ask'd for, the nurse curs'd in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

Nor read the subtle shining secrecies
Writ in the glassy *margent* of such *books*."

This speech is full of quibbles. The *unbound* lover is a quibble on the *binding* of a *book*, and the *binding* in *marriage;* and the word *cover* is a quibble on the law phrase for a married woman, *femme couverte*.

[7] It is not quite clear what is meant by this. Dr. Farmer explains it, "The fish *is not yet caught;*" and thinks there is a reference to the ancient use of fish-skins for book-covers. It does not well appear what this meaning can have to do with the context. The sense apparently required is, that the fish is hidden within the sea, as a thing of beauty within a beautiful thing. Malone thinks we should read, "The fish lives in the *shell;*" and he adds that "the sea cannot be said to be a beautiful cover to a fish, though a shell may." — This whole speech and the next are wanting in the quarto of 1597. H

[8] The quarto of 1597 reads, "*engage* mine eye."

Lady C. We follow thee. — Juliet, the county stays.

Nurse. Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Street.

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, *with five or six Maskers, Torch-Bearers, and Others.*

Rom. What! shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?
Or shall we on without apology?

Ben. The date is out of such prolixity.
We'll have no Cupid hood-wink'd with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;[2]
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance:[3]

[1] In King Henry VIII., where the king introduces himself at the entertainment given by Wolsey, he appears, like Romeo and his companions, in a *mask*, and sends a messenger before with an apology for his intrusion. This was a custom observed by those who came uninvited, with a desire to conceal themselves, for the sake of intrigue, or to enjoy the greater freedom of conversation. Their entry on these occasions was always prefaced by some speech in praise of the beauty of the ladies, or the generosity of the entertainer; and to the *prolixity* of such introductions it is probable Romeo is made to allude. In Histriomastix, 1610, a man expresses his wonder that the maskers enter without any compliment: "What, come they in so blunt, without device?" Of this kind of masquerading there is a specimen in Timon, where Cupid precedes a troop of ladies with a speech.

[2] The Tartarian bows resemble in their form the old Roman or Cupid's bow, such as we see on medals and bas-relief. Shakespeare uses the epithet to distinguish it from the English bow, whose shape is the segment of a circle. — A *crow-keeper* was simply a *scare-crow*. See King Lear, Act iv. sc. 6, note 11.

[3] This and the preceding lines are found only in the quarto of 1597. Of course there is an allusion to some of the stage practices of the Poet's time. H.

But, let them measure us by what they will,
We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

Rom. Give me a torch:[4] I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

Mer. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

Rom. Not I, believe me: You have dancing shoes,
With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead,
So stakes me to the ground, I cannot move.

Mer. You are a lover: borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

Rom. I am too sore enpierced with his shaft,
To soar with his light feathers; and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:[5]
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

Mer. And, to sink in it, should you burden love;
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

Rom. Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous; and it pricks like thorn

Mer. If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down. —
Give me a case to put my visage in:

[*Putting on a Mask.*

A visor for a visor! — what care I,
What curious eye doth quote deformities?[6]
Here are the beetle-brows, shall blush for me.

[4] A *torch-bearer* was a constant appendage to every troop of maskers. To *hold a torch* was anciently no degrading office. Queen Elizabeth's gentlemen pensioners attended her to Cambridge, and *held torches* while a play was acted before her in the Chapel of King's College on a Sunday evening.

[5] Milton thought it not beneath the dignity of his task to use a similar quibble in Paradise Lost, Book iv.: "At one slight *bound* he overleap'd all *bound*." H.

[6] *Quote* was often used for *observe* or *notice*. — Brooke's poem

Ben. Come, knock, and enter; and no sooner in,
But every man betake him to his legs.

Rom. A torch for me: let wantons, light of heart,
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels;[7]
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,—
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on:[8]
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

Mer. Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word.[9]

furnished the following hint towards the Mercutio of the play otherwise the character is wholly origiual:

"At thone syde of her chayre her lover Romeo,
And on the other syde there sat one cald Mercutio;
A courtier that eche where was highly had in pryce,
For he was coorteous of his speche, and pleasant of devise.
Even as a lyon would emong the lambs be bolde,
Such was emong the bashfull maydes Mercutio to beholde.
With frendly gripe he ceasd fayre Juliets snowish hand:
A gyft he had that Nature gave him in his swathing band,
That frosen mountayn yse was never halfe so cold,
As were his hands, though nere so neer the fire he did them holde." H.

[7] It has been before observed that the apartments of our ancestors were strewed with rushes, and so was the ancient stage.

[8] To *hold the candle* is a common proverbial expression for being an idle spectator. Among Ray's proverbial sentences we have "A good candle-holder proves a good gamester." This is the "grandsire phrase" with which Romeo is proverbed. There is another old maxim alluded to, which advises to *give over* when the game is at the fairest.

[9] *Dun is the mouse* is a proverbial saying of vague signification, alluding to the colour of the mouse; but frequently employed with no other intent than that of quibbling on the word *done*. Why it is attributed to a constable we know not. So in The Two Merry Milkmaids, 1620, "Why, then, 'tis done, and *dun's the mouse*, and undoue all the courtiers." *To draw dun out of the mire* was a rural pastime, in which *dun* meant a dun horse, supposed to be stuck in the mire, and sometimes represented by one of the persons who played, at others by a log of wood. Mr. Gifford has described the game, at which he remembers often to have played, in a note to Ben Jonson's Masque of Christmas: "A log of wood is brought into the midst of the room; this is *dun* (the cart horse) and a cry is raised that he is stuck in the mire. Two of the com-

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire
Of this save-reverence love,[10] wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears. — Come, we burn day-light, ho![11]

Rom. Nay, that's not so.

Mer. I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning; for our judgment sits
Five times in that, ere once in our five wits.[12]

Rom. And we mean well in going to this mask,
But 'tis no wit to go.

Mer. Why, may one ask?

Rom. I dreamt a dream to-night.

Mer. And so did I

Rom. Well, what was yours?

Mer. That dreamers often lie.

Rom. In bed, asleep, while they do dream things true.

Mer. O! then, I see, queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife;[13] and she comes

pany advance, either with or without ropes, to draw him out. After repeated attempts, they find themselves unable to do it, and call for more assistance. The game continues till all the company take part in it, when *dun* is extricated of course; and the merriment arises from the awkward and affected efforts of the rustics to lift the log, and sundry arch contrivances to let the ends of it fall on one another's toes."

[10] The quartos of 1599 and 1609 have, "*Or* save *you* reverence love;" the folio, "*Or* save *your* reverence love." The correction is derived from the quarto of 1597. H.

[11] That is, use a candle when the sun shines; an old proverbial phrase for superfluous actions in general. See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act ii. sc. 1, note 3. H.

[12] The quartos of 1599 and 1609 read "*fine* wits." Malone made the correction. — In the second line before, the folio has "*lights, lights,* by day," instead of, "*like lamps* by day." H.

[13] The *fairies' midwife* does not mean the midwife *to* the fairies but that she was the person *among* the fairies whose department it was to deliver the fancies of sleeping men of their dreams, those

In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Over men's noses as they lie asleep:[14]
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams:
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film
Her wagoner, a small gray-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid:[15]
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love:
On courtiers' knees, that dream on courtesies straight:
O'er lawyer's fingers, who straight dream on fees:[16]
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream;
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweet-meats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit:

children of an idle brain. When we say the *king's judges*, we do not mean persons who judge the king, but persons appointed by him to judge his subjects. — STEEVENS.

[14] So all the old copies except the first quarto, which has *Athwart* instead of *Over*. The metrical arrangement of this speech is found only in the quarto of 1597; the other old copies printing it all as prose except the last four lines. H.

[15] *Maid* is from the first quarto; the other old copies reading *man*. The next three lines are not in the first quarto. H.

[16] This line also is wanting in the quarto of 1597, which has *lawyer's lap* instead of *courtier's nose* in the fourth line below.

And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep;
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,
That plats the manes of horses in the night;[17]
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them, and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage.
This, this is she —

Rom. Peace, peace! Mercutio, peace!
Thou talk'st of nothing.

[17] This alludes to a singular superstition, not yet forgotten in some parts of the continent. It was believed that certain malignant spirits assumed occasionally the likenesses of women clothed in white; that in this character they sometimes haunted stables in the night, carrying in their hands tapers of wax, which they dropped on the horses' manes, thereby plaiting them into inextricable knots, to the great annoyance of the poor animals, and the vexation of their masters. There is a very uncommon old print, by Hans Burgmair, relating to this subject. A witch enters the stable with a lighted torch; and, previously to the operation of entangling the horse's mane, practises her enchantments on the groom, who is lying asleep on his back, and apparently influenced by the night-mare. The belamites or elf-stones were regarded as charms against the last-mentioned disease, and against evil spirits of all kinds. — The next line, "And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs," seems to be unconnected with the preceding, and to mark a superstition which, as Dr. Warburton has observed, may have originated from the *plica Polonica*, which was supposed to be the operation of the wicked elves; whence the clotted hair was called elf-locks, or elf-knots. Thus Edgar talks of "elfing all his hair in knots." — DOUCE. H.

Mer. True, I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy;
Which is as thin of substance as the air;
And more inconstant than the wind, who wooes
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.[18]

Ben. This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves:
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

Rom. I fear, too early; for my mind misgives,
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels; and expire the term
Of a despised life,[19] clos'd in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death:

[18] *Face*, in this line, is from the quarto of 1597; the other old copies having *side*, which Mr. Collier's second folio changes to *tide*. — Coleridge has the following on Mercutio: "O! how shall I describe that exquisite ebullience and overflow of youthful life, wafted on over the laughing waves of pleasure and prosperity, as wanton beauty that distorts the face on which she knows her lover is gazing enraptured, and wrinkles her forehead in the triumph of its smoothness? Wit ever wakeful, fancy busy and procreative as an insect, courage, an easy mind that, without cares of its own, is at once disposed to laugh away those of others, and yet to be interested in them, — these and all congenial qualities, melting into the common *copula* of them all, the man of rank and the gentleman, with all its excellences and all its weaknesses, constitute the character of Mercutio!" H.

[19] This way of using *expire* was not uncommon in the Poet's time. So in Daniel's Complaint of Rosamond:

> "Thou must not think thy flow'r can always flourish,
> And that thy beauty will be still admir'd;
> But that hose rays which all these flames do nourish,
> Cancell'd with time, *will have their date expir'd*." H.

But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail! [20] — On, lusty gentlemen.

Ben. Strike, drum.[21] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.[1] A Hall in CAPULET's House.

Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.

1 *Serv.* Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher![2] he scrape a trencher!

2 *Serv.* When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands, and they unwash'd too, 'tis a foul thing.

1 *Serv.* Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard,[3] look to the plate. — Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane;[4] and, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone, and Nell. — Antony! and Potpan!

2 *Serv.* Ay, boy; ready.

[20] So in the first quarto; the other old copies have *suit* instead of *sail.* H.

[21] Here the folio adds: "*They march about the stage, and serving men come forth with their napkins.*"

[1] The opening of this scene, down to the entrance of Capulet is not in the quarto of 1597. H.

[2] To *shift a trencher* was technical. Trenchers were used in Shakespeare's time and long after by persons of good fashion and quality.

[3] The *court cupboard* was the ancient sideboard: it was a cumbrous piece of furniture, with stages or shelves gradually receding, like stairs, to the top, whereon the plate was displayed at festivals. They are mentioned in many old comedies.

[4] *Marchpane* was a constant article in the desserts of our ancestors. It was a sweet cake, composed of filberts, almonds, pistachios, pine kernels, and sugar of roses, with a small portion of flour. They were often made in fantastic forms.

1 *Serv.* You are look'd for and call'd for, ask'd for and sought for, in the great chamber.

2 *Serv.* We cannot be here and there too.— Cheerly, boys! be brisk awhile, and the longer liver take all. [*They retire behind.*

Enter CAPULET, *&c., with the Guests and the Maskers.*

Cap. Welcome, gentlemen! ladies, that have their toes
Unplagued with corns, will have a bout with you:[5]—
Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all
Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty, she,
I'll swear, hath corns: Am I come near you now?
You are welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day,
That I have worn a visor, and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please;—'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.
You are welcome, gentlemen!—Come, musicians, play.
A hall! a hall![6] give room, and foot it, girls.—
[*Music plays, and they dance.*
More lights, ye knaves! and turn the tables up,[7]
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.—
Ah, sirrah! this unlook'd-for sport comes well.
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet;[8]

[5] So the first quarto; the other old copies, "will *walk about* with you." H.

[6] An exclamation to make room in a crowd for any particular purpose, as we now say *a ring! a ring!*

[7] The ancient *tables* were flat leaves or *boards* joined by hinges and placed on trestles; when they were to be removed they were therefore *turned up*.

[8] *Cousin* was a common expression for *kinsman*.

For you and I are past our dancing-days:
How long is't now, since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

2 Cap. By'r lady, thirty years.

1 Cap. What, man! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much:
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five-and-twenty years; and then we mask'd.

2 Cap. 'Tis more, 'tis more: his son is elder, sir;
His son is thirty.

1 Cap. Will you tell me that?
His son was but a ward two years ago.

Rom. What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

Serv. I know not, sir.

Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;[9]
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.[10]
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
I never saw true beauty till this night.

Tyb. This, by his voice, should be a Montague.—

[9] So read all the old copies till the second folio, which has, "*Her beauty* hangs upon the cheek of night." The Poet has a similar passage in his 27th Sonnet:

"Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new."

H.

[10] So all the old copies except the first quarto, which has *happy* instead of *blessed*. H

Fetch me my rapier, boy. — What! dares the slave
Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,
To fleer and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

1 *Cap.* Why, how now, kinsman! wherefore storm you so?

Tyb. Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe;
A villain, that is hither come in spite,
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

1 *Cap.* Young Romeo is it?

Tyb. 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

1 *Cap.* Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
He bears him like a portly gentleman;
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him,
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth.
I would not for the wealth of all this town,
Here, in my house, do him disparagement;
Therefore be patient, take no note of him:
It is my will; the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence, and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

Tyb. It fits, when such a villain is a guest:
I'll not endure him.

1 *Cap.* He shall be endur'd:
What, goodman boy! — I say, he shall; — go to:
Am I the master here, or you? go to.
You'll not endure him! — God shall mend my soul, —
You'll make a mutiny among my guests!
You will set cock-a-hoop! you'll be the man!

Tyb. Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

1 *Cap.* Go to, go to;
You are a saucy boy. — Is't so, indeed? —
This trick may chance to scath you;[11] — I know what.

[11] That is, do you an injury

You must contrary me! marry, 'tis time, —
Well said, my hearts! — You are a princox; [12] go: —
Be quiet, or — More light! more light, for shame! —
I'll make you quiet: What! — Cheerly, my hearts!

Tyb. Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting,
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw; but this intrusion shall,
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall. [*Exit.*

Rom. If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this, [13] —

[12] Minshew calls a *princox* "a ripe-headed young boy," and derives the word from the Latin *precox*. The more probable derivation is from *prime cock;* that is, a *cock* of *prime* courage or spirit; hence applied to a pert, conceited, forward person. So in the Return from Parnassus: "Your proud university *princox* thinkes he is a man of such merit, the world cannot sufficiently endow him with preferment." And in Phaer's Virgil: "*Fyne princox*, fresh of face, furst uttring youth by buds unshorne." — Coleridge remarks upon this dialogue thus: "How admirable is the old man's impetuosity, at once contrasting, yet harmonized, with young Tybalt's quarrelsome violence! But it would be endless to repeat observations of this sort. Every leaf is different on an oak tree; but still we can only say, — our tongues defrauding our eyes, — This is another oak-leaf!" H.

[13] The old copies have *sinne* instead of *fine;* an easy misprint when *sinne* was written with a long *s;* corrected by Warburton. — In the preceding line, the first quarto has *unworthy* instead of *unworthiest.* — The *temper* of this first interview is very happily suggested by the corresponding passage in Brooke's poem:

"As soone as had the knight the vyrgins right hand raught,
Within his trembling haud her left hath Romeus caught.
Then she with slender hand his tender palm hath prest:
What joy, trow you, was graffed so in Romeus brest?
At last, with trembling voyce and shamefast chere, the mayde
Unto her Romeus tournde, and thus to him she sayde:
'O, blessed be the time of thy arrivall here.'
'What chaunce (q' he) unware to me, O lady mine, is hapt,
That geves you worthy cause my cumming here to blisse?'
Fyrst ruthfully she lookd, then sayd with smyling chere, —
'Mervayle no whit my heartes delight my only knight and fere;

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

Jul. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

Rom. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers, too?

Jul. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use — in prayer.

Rom. O then! dear saint, let lips do what hands do:
They pray; grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

Jul. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

Rom. Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take. [*Kissing her.*[14]
Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purg'd.

Mercutious ysy hande had all to-frozen myne,
And of thy goodness thou agayne hast warmed it with thyne.'"
H.

[14] In Shakespeare's time, the kissing of a lady at a social gathering seems not to have been thought indecorous. So, in King Henry VIII., we have Lord Sands kissing Anne Boleyn, at the supper given by Wolsey.— Mr. R. G. White, in his Shakespeare's Scholar, has the following happy remarks on this bit of dialogue: "I have never seen a Juliet upon the stage, who appeared to appreciate the archness of the dialogue with Romeo in this scene. They go through it solemnly, or, at best, with staid propriety. They reply literally to all Romeo's speeches about saints and palmers. But it should be noticed that, though this is the first interview of the lovers, we do not hear them speak until the close of their dialogue, in which they have arrived at a pretty thorough understanding of their mutual feelings. Juliet makes a feint of parrying Romeo's advances; but does it archly, and knows that he is to have the kiss he sues for. He asks,—'Have not saints lips, and holy palmers, too?' The stage Juliet answers with literal solemnity. But it was not a *conventicle* at old Capulet's: Juliet was not holding forth. How demure was her

Jul. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

Rom. Sin from my lips? O, trespass sweetly urg'd!
Give me my sin again.

Jul. You kiss by th' book.

Nurse. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

Rom. What is her mother?

Nurse. Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.
I nurs'd her daughter, that you talk'd withal:
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.

Rom. Is she a Capulet?
O, dear account! my life is my foe's debt.

Ben. Away, begone: the sport is at the best.

Rom. Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.

1 *Cap.* Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone,
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.[15] —
Is it e'en so? Why, then I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen;[16] good night: —
More torches here! — Come on, then, let's to bed.

real answer: 'Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use — in prayer.' And when Romeo fairly gets her into the corner, towards which she has been contriving to be driven; and says, — 'Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purg'd,' and does put them to that purgation; how slyly the pretty puss gives him an opportunity to repeat the penance, by replying, — 'Then have my lips the sin that they have took.'" H.

[15] *Towards* is *ready, at hand.* A *banquet*, or *rere-supper*, as it was sometimes called, was similar to our dessert.

[16] Here the quarto of 1597 adds the following:

> "I promise you, but for your company,
> I would have been in bed an hour ago:
> Light to my chamber, ho!"

Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late;
I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but* JULIET *and Nurse*

Jul. Come hither, nurse: What is yond' gentleman?

Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

Jul. What's he, that now is going out of door?

Nurse. Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

Jul. What's he, that follows there, that would not dance?

Nurse. I know not.

Jul. Go, ask his name. — If he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

Nurse. His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.

Jul. My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

Nurse. What's this? what's this?

Jul. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danc'd withal. [*One calls within*, JULIET!

Nurse. Anon, anon: —
Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter CHORUS.[17]

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir:
That fair, for which love groan'd for,[18] and would die,

[17] This Chorus is not in the quarto of 1597, but is in all the other old copies.

[18] This doubling of a preposition was common with the old writers, and occurs divers times in these plays. See As You Like It, Act ii. sc. 7, note 10. — *Fair*, in this line, is used as a substantive, and in the sense of *beauty*. The usage was common. H.

With tender Juliet match'd is now not fair.
Now Romeo is belov'd, and loves again,
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks;
But to his foe suppos'd he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new-beloved any where:
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. An open Place, adjoining CAPULET'S Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Can I go forward, when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.
[*He climbs the Wall, and leaps down within it.*

Enter BENVOLIO *and* MERCUTIO.

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo! Romeo!
Mer. He is wise;
And, on my life, hath stolen him home to bed.
Ben. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard[1] wall.
Call, good Mercutio.

[1] *Orchard*, from *hort-yard*, was formerly used for a *garden*. See Julius Cæsar, Act ii. sc. 1, note 1. H.

Mer. Nay, I'll conjure too. —
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh;
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but — Ah me! pronounce[2] but — love and dove;
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nickname for her purblind son and heir,
Young auburn Cupid, he that shot so trim,[3]
When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid. —
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not
The ape[4] is dead, and I must conjure him. —
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,

[2] This is the reading of the quarto of 1597. Those of 1599 and 1609 and the folio read *provant*, an evident corruption. The folio of 1632 has *couply*, meaning *couple*, which has been the reading of many modern editions.

[3] The old copies have "*Abraham* Cupid," which Upton changed to "*Adam* Cupid," supposing it to refer to Adam Bell the famous archer of the old ballad. The change is adopted in all modern editions excepting Knight's, who retains *Abraham*, explaining it to mean "the cheat — the 'Abraham man' — of our old statutes." *Auburn* is proposed by Mr. Dyce, who shows that it was a common epithet of Cupid, and was often misprinted *abraham* and *Abram*. Thus, in Soliman and Perseda, we have "*abraham*-colour'd Troion" for Trojan with *auburn*-colour'd hair; and in Coriolanus, Act ii. sc. 3, "not that our heads are some brown, some black, some *Abram*," where *Abram* is changed to *auburn* in modern editions. — *Trim* is from the first quarto, the other old copies having *true*. That *trim* is the right word, is shown by the old ballad of "King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid," which the Poet had in his mind. One stanza is as follows:

> "The blinded boy, that shoots so *trim*,
> From heaven down did hie;
> He drew a dart, and shot at him
> In place where he did lie." H.

[4] This phrase in Shakespeare's time was used as an expression of tenderness, like *poor fool*.

And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

Ben. An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

Mer. This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it, and conjur'd it down;
That were some spite: my invocation
Is fair and honest, and, in his mistress' name,
I conjure only but to raise up him.

Ben. Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
To be consorted with the humorous night:[5]
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

Mer. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar tree,
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit,
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone. —
O Romeo! that she were, O, that she were
An open *et cætera*, thou a poprin pear! —
Romeo, good night: — I'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep.[6]
Come, shall we go?

Ben. Go, then; for 'tis in vain
To seek him here, that means not to be found.

[*Exeunt.*

[5] That is, the *humid*, the moist *dewy* night.

[6] The *truckle-bed* or *trundle-bed* was a bed for the servant or page, and was so made as to run under the "*standing*-bed," which was for the master. See The Merry Wives of Windsor Act iv. sc. 5, note 1. — We are not to suppose that Mercutio slept in the servant's bed: he merely speaks of his *truckle-bed* in contrast with the *field-bed*, that is, the *ground*. H.

SCENE II. CAPULET'S Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. He jests at scars, that never felt a wound. —
[JULIET *appears above, at a Window.*
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun! —
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid,[1] since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off. —
It is my lady; O! it is my love:
O, that she knew she were! —
She speaks, yet she says nothing: What of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it. —
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp: her eyes in heaven[2]
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

Jul. Ah me!

Rom. She speaks: —

[1] That is, be not a votary to the moon, to Diana.

[2] So the first quarto: the other old copies have *eye* instead of *eyes*. E.

O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,[3]
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Jul. O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

Jul. 'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy;—
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man.[4] O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet:
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes,
Without that title. — Romeo, doff thy name;
And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.

[3] So the quarto of 1597; the other old copies, "lazy-*puffing* clouds." Mr. Collier's second folio changes *puffing* to *passing*, which may be right, the long *s*. as it was then written, being easily mistaken for *f*. — "Take notice," says Coleridge, "in this enchanting scene of the contrast of Romeo's love with his former fancy; and weigh the skill shown in justifying him from his inconstancy by making us feel the difference of his passion. Yet this, too, is a love in, although not merely of, the imagination."

H.

[4] The words, "nor any other part," are found only in the first quarto. In the second line below, also, *name* is from the first quarto; the other old copies reading, "By any other *word*."

H.

Rom. I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Jul. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

Rom. By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee:
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Jul. My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance,[5] yet I know the sound.
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair saint, if either thee displease.

Jul. How cam'st thou hither, tell me? and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb;
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Rom. With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.[6]

Jul. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

Rom. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity

Jul. I would not for the world they saw thee here.

[5] So the quarto of 1597; the other old copies, "*thy* tongue's *uttering*." In the next speech, also, all the old copies but the first quarto have *maid* and *dislike* instead of *saint* and *displease*. H.

[6] That is, no *stop*, no hinderance. Thus the quarto of 1597 The later copies read, "no *stop* to me."

Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;
And, but thou love me,[7] let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued,[8] wanting of thy love.

Jul. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to inquire:
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

Jul. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face;
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment![9]
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say, ay;
And I will take thy word; yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false: at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs.[10] O, gentle Romeo!
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,

[7] *But* is here used in its exceptive sense, *without* or *unless*.

[8] That is, *postponed*, delayed or deferred to a more distant period. The whole passage has the following construction: "I have night to screen me:—*yet unless* thou love me, let them find me here. It were better that they ended my life at once, than to have death delayed, and to want thy love."

[9] That is, farewell attention to forms.

[10] This Shakespeare found in Ovid's Art of Love; perhaps in Marlowe's translation:

> "For Jove himself sits in the azure skies,
> *And laughs below at lovers' perjuries.*"

So thou wilt woo; but, else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
And therefore thou may'st think my haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.[11]
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion: therefore, pardon me;
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Rom. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops, —

Jul. O! swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Jul. Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Rom. If my heart's dear love —

Jul. Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say it lightens.[12] Sweet, good night!

[11] So the first quarto: the later editions have *coying* instead of *more cunning*. Also, in the first line of the next speech, all the old copies but the first have *vow* instead of *swear*. H.

[12] With love, pure love, there is always an anxiety for the safety of the object, a disinterestedness, by which it is distinguished from the counterfeits of its name. Compare this scene with Act iii. sc. 1, of The Tempest. I do not know a more wonderful instance of Shakespeare's mastery in playing a distinctly rememberable variety on the same remembered air, than in the transporting love-confessions of Romeo and Juliet, and Ferdinand and

This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Rom. O! wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Rom. Th' exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it;
And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Would'st thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
[*Nurse calls within.*
I hear some noise within: dear love, adieu!—
Anon, good nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit.*

Rom. O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, *above.*

Jul. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night, indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow

Miranda. There seems more passion in the one, and more dignity in the other; yet you feel that the sweet girlish lingering and busy movement of Juliet, and the calmer and more maidenly fondness of Miranda, might easily pass into each other. — COLERIDGE. H.

By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.[13]

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. I come anon.—But, if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee,—

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. By and by; I come.—
To cease thy suit,[14] and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.

Rom. So thrive my soul,—

Jul. A thousand times good night! [*Exit.*

Rom. A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.—
Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their books;
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
[*Retiring slowly.*

[13] In Brooke's poem Juliet uses nearly the same expressions:

"But if your thought be chaste, and have on vertue ground;
If wedlocke be the marke, which your desire hath found;
Obedience set aside, unto my parentes dewe,
The quarrell eke that long agoe betweene our householdes grewe;
Both me and myne I will all whole to you betake,
And, *following you whereso you goe*, my fathers house forsake.
But if by wanton love and by unlawfull *sute*
You thinke to plucke my maydehood's dainty frute,
You are begylde; and now your Juliet you *beseekes*
To *cease your sute*, and suffer her to live emong her likes."

[14] This passage is not in the first quarto, and the other old copies have *strife* instead of *suit*. . *Suit* agrees much better with the context, is the word commonly given in modern editions, and is found in Mr. Collier's second folio. H.

Re-enter JULIET, *above.*

Jul. Hist! Romeo, hist! — O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tercel-gentle back again![15]
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where echo lies,
And make her airy voice more hoarse than mine
With repetition of my Romeo's name.

Rom. It is my soul, that calls upon my name:
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

Jul. Romeo!

Rom. My dear![16]

Jul. At what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

Rom. At the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

Rom. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

Jul. 'Tis almost morning, I would have thee gone;

[15] The tercel is the male of the *gosshawk*, and had the epithet *gentle* annexed to it, from the ease with which it was tamed, and its attachment to man. Tardif, in his book of Falconry, says that the tiersel has its name from being one of three birds usually found in the aerie of a falcon, two of which are females, and the *third* a male; hence called *tiercelet*, or the *third*. According to the old books of sport the falcon *gentle* and tiercel *gentle* are birds for a prince. — For *voice*, third line after, all the old copies but the first quarto have *tongue*. H.

[16] So the undated quarto. The quarto of 1597 has *Madam*; those of 1599 and 1609 and the first folio have *niece* instead of *dear* The second folio changes *niece* to *sweet*, which is commonly adopted in modern editions. H

And yet no further than a wanton's bird;
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Rom. I would I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I;
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night, till it be morrow.
[*Exit.*

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast! —
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,[17]
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. Friar LAURENCE's Cell.

Enter Friar LAURENCE, *with a Basket.*

Fri. The gray-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,[1]
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
And flecked[2] darkness like a drunkard reels

[17] So the quarto of 1597; the later copies, "my ghostly *friars close* cell." — The quartos of 1599 and 1609 and the folio of 1623 assign the first line of this speech to Juliet. H.

[1] The reverend character of the Friar, like all Shakespeare's representations of the great professions, is very delightful, and tranquillizing, yet it is no digression, but immediately necessary to the carrying on of the plot. — COLERIDGE. H.

[2] *Flecked* is dappled, streaked, or variegated. Lord Surrey uses the word in his translation of the fourth Æneid: "Her quivering cheekes *flecked* with deadly stain." So in the old play of

From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels:[3]
Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
I must fill up this osier cage of ours,
With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.[4]
The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb;[5]
What is her burying grave, that is her womb;
And from her womb children of divers kind
We sucking on her natural bosom find:
Many for many virtues excellent,
None but for some, and yet all different.
O! mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
And vice sometime's by action dignified.

The Four Prentices: "We'll *fleck* our white steeds in your Christian blood."

[3] So the first quarto; the later copies have *burning* instead of *fiery*. *Fiery* is preferred here, as *burning* occurs in the next line. H.

[4] So Drayton, in the eighteenth Song of his Poly-Olbion, speaking of a hermit:

> "His happy time he spends the works of God to see,
> In those so sundry herbs which there in plenty grow,
> Whose sundry strange effects he only seeks to know
> And in a little *maund*, being made of *oziers* small,
> Which serveth him to do full many a thing withal,
> He very choicely sorts his simples got abroad."

Shakespeare has very artificially prepared us for the part Friar Laurence is afterwards to sustain. Having thus early discovered him to be a chemist, we are not surprised when we find him furnishing the draught which produces the catastrophe of the piece.

[5] Lucretius has the same thought: "Omniparens, eadem rerum commune sepulcrum." Likewise, Milton, in Paradise Lost, Book ii. "The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave." H.

Within the infant rind of this weak flower
Poison hath residence, and medicine power:
For this, being smelt, with that part[6] cheers each part;
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
Two such opposed kings encamp them still[7]
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;
And, where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Good morrow, father!
Fri. *Benedicite!*
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?—
Young son, it argues a distemper'd head,
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;
But where unbruised youth, with unstuff'd brain,
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign.
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,
Thou art uprous'd by some distemperature:
Or, if not so, then here I hit it right,—
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.
Rom. That last is true; the sweeter rest was mine.
Fri. God pardon sin! wert thou with Rosaline!
Rom. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.
Fri. That's my good son: But where hast thou been, then?
Rom. I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy;

[6] That is, with its *odour*.

[7] The first quarto, alone, has *foes* instead of *kings*. Also, in the fourth line above, it has *small* instead of *weak*. H.

Where, on a sudden, one hath wounded me,
That's by me wounded: both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physic lies.
I bear no hatred, blessed man; for, lo!
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Fri. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift:
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

Rom. Then, plainly know, my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combin'd, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage. When, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us this day.

Fri. Holy St. Francis! what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love, then, lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
Jesu Maria! what a deal of brine
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears:
Lo! here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet.
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline:
And art thou chang'd? pronounce this sentence then, —
Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

Rom. Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

Fri. For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

Rom. And bad'st me bury love.
Fri. Not in a grave,
To lay one in, another out to have.
Rom. I pray thee, chide not: she whom I love now
Doth grace for grace, and love for love allow:
The other did not so.
Fri. O! she knew well,
Thy love did read by rote, and could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.
Rom. O! let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.
Fri. Wisely, and slow: they stumble, that run fast. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Street.

Enter BENVOLIO *and* MERCUTIO.

Mer. Where the devil should this Romeo be?—
Came he not home to-night?
Ben. Not to his father's: I spoke with his man.
Mer. Why, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline,
Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.
Ben. Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.
Mer. A challenge, on my life.
Ben. Romeo will answer it.
Mer. Any man, that can write, may answer a letter.
Ben. Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

Mer. Alas, poor Romeo! he is already dead; stabb'd with a white wench's black eye; shot thorough the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft:[1] And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than prince of cats[2] I can tell you. O! he is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button; a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house, — of the first and second cause.[3] Ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hay![4]

Ben. The what?

Mer. The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes, these new tuners of accents! — "By Jesu, a very good blade! — a very tall man! — a very good whore!" — Why, is not this a lamentable

[1] The allusion is to archery. The clout, or white mark at which the arrows were directed, was fastened by a black *pin*, placed in the centre of it. To hit this was the highest ambition of every marksman.

[2] *Tybert*, the name given to a cat in the old story book of Reynard the Fox. So in Dekker's Satiromastix: "Tho' you were *Tybert*, prince of long-tail'd cats." Again, in Have With You to Saffron Walden, by Nash: "Not *Tibalt* prince of cats." — The words, "I can tell you," are from the first quarto. — *Prick-song* music was music *pricked* or written down, and so sung by *note*, not from memory, or as learnt by the ear. H.

[3] That is, a gentleman of the first rank among these duellists; and one who understands the whole science of quarrelling, and will tell you of the *first cause*, and the *second cause* for which a man is to fight. The clown, in As You Like It, talks of the *seventh cause* in the same sense.

[4] All the terms of the fencing school were originally Italian; the rapier, or small thrusting sword, being first used in Italy. The *hay* is the word *hai*, you *have* it, used when a thrust reaches the antagonist. Our fencers on the same occasion cry out *ha!*

thing, grandsire,[5] that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these *pardonnez-mois*, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench?[6] O, their *bons*, their *bons!*

Enter ROMEO.

Ben. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

Mer. Without his roe, like a dried herring.—O, flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!—Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in: Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench;—marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her: Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gipsy; Helen and Hero, hildings and harlots; Thisbe, a grey eye or so,[7] but not to the purpose.—Signior Romeo, *bon jour!* there's a French salutation to your French slop.[8] You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

Rom. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

Mer. The slip, sir, the slip:[9] Can you not conceive?

Rom. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

[5] Humorously apostrophising his ancestors, whose sober times were unacquainted with the fopperies here complained of.

[6] During the ridiculous fashion which prevailed of great "boulstered breeches," it is said to have been necessary to cut away hollow places in the benches of the House of Commons, without which those *who stood on the new* FORM could not sit at ease on the old bench.

[7] A *grey* eye appears to have meant what we now call a *blue* eye. He means to admit that Thisbe had a tolerably fine eye.

[8] The *slop* was a kind of wide-kneed breeches, or rather trowsers. See Much Ado about Nothing, Act iii. sc. 2, note 5

[9] In the Poet's time, there was a counterfeit coin called a *slip* See Troilus and Cressida, Act ii. sc. 3, note 4. H.

Mer. That's as much as to say, such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

Rom. Meaning, to courtesy.

Mer. Thou hast most kindly hit it.

Rom. A most courteous exposition.

Mer. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

Rom. Pink for flower.

Mer. Right.

Rom. Why, then is my pump well flower'd.[10]

Mer. Well said:[11] Follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

Rom. O single-sol'd jest,[12] solely singular for the singleness.

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio, for my wits fail.[13]

Rom. Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

Mer. Nay, if our wits run the wild-goose chase,[14]

[10] Romeo wore *pinked* pumps, that is, punched with holes in figures. It was the custom to wear ribbons in the shoes formed in the shape of roses or other flowers. Thus in The Masque of Gray's Inn, 1614: "Every masker's *pump* was fastened with a *flower* suitable to his cap."

[11] So the quarto of 1597; the other old copies, *Sure wit.* H.

[12] *Single* was often used for *simple* or *silly*. *Single-souled* had also the same meaning: "He is a good *sengyll soule*, and can do no harm; est doli nescius non simplex." — *Horman's Vulgaria.* It sometimes was synonymous with *threadbare*, *coarse-spun*, and this is its meaning here. Cotgrave explains "Monsieur de trois au boisseau et de trois à un épée: a threadbare, coarse-spun, *single-soled* gentleman." See Macbeth, Act i. sc. 3, note 14; and 2 Henry IV., Act i. sc. 2, note 20.

[13] So the first quarto; other old copies, "my wits *faints*." H.

[14] One kind of horserace which resembled the flight of *wild geese*, was formerly known by this name. Two horses were started to

I have done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits, than, I am sure, I have in my whole five. Was I with you there for the goose?

Rom. Thou wast never with me for any thing, when thou wast not there for the goose.

Mer. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not.

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting;[15] it is a most sharp sauce.

Rom. And is it not well serv'd in to a sweet goose?

Mer. O! here's a wit of cheverel,[16] that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad.

Rom. I stretch it out for that word — broad; which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

Mer. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.[17]

Ben. Stop there, stop there.

gether, and whichever rider could get the lead, the other rider was obliged to follow him wherever he chose to go. This explains the pleasantry kept up here. "My wits fail," says Mercutio. Romeo exclaims briskly, "Switch and spurs, switch and spurs." To which Mercutio rejoins, "Nay, if our wits run the *wild goose chase*," &c.

[15] The allusion is to an apple of that name.

[16] Soft stretching leather, kid-skin. See King Henry VIII., Act ii. sc. 3, note 2.

[17] *Natural* was often used, as it still is, for a *fool*. The *bauble* was the professional fool's "staff of office." See All's Well that Ends Well Act iv. sc. 5, note 3; and Titus Andronicus, Act v sc. 1, note 4. H.

Mer. Thou desirest me stop in my tale against the hair.[18]

Ben. Thou would'st else have made thy tale large.

Mer. O, thou art deceiv'd! I would have made it short; for I was come to the whole depth of my tale, and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

Rom. Here's goodly gear!

Enter the Nurse and PETER.

Mer. A sail, a sail!

Ben. Two, two; a shirt, and a smock.

Nurse. Peter, pr'ythee, give me my fan.[19]

Mer. 'Pr'ythee, do, good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer of the two.[20]

Nurse. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. God ye good den,[21] fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den?

Mer. 'Tis no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.[22]

[18] This phrase, of French extraction, *à contre poil*, occurs again in Troilus and Cressida: "Merry *against the hair.*"

[19] In The Serving Man's Comfort, 1598, we are informed, "The mistresse must have one to carry her cloake and hood, another her *fanne.*" So in Love's Labour's Lost: "To see him walk before a lady, and to *bear her fan.*"

[20] We here follow the quarto of 1597. In the other old copies we have the passage thus: "*Nurse.* Peter.—*Peter.* Anon.—*Nurse.* My fan, Peter.—*Mer.* Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer face." Divers modern editions have compounded a third reading out of the two; which is hardly allowable anywhere, and something worse than useless here, even if it were allowable. H.

[21] That is, "God *give* you a good *even.*" The first of these contractions is common in our old dramas.

[22] That is, the *point* of noon. So in Bright's Charactery, or Arte of Short Writing, 1588: "If the worde end in ed, as I loved.

Nurse. Out upon you! what a man are you?

Rom. One, gentlewoman, that God hath made for himself to mar.[23]

Nurse. By my troth, it is well said:— For himself to mar, quoth'a?— Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

Rom. I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him, than he was when you sought him. I am the youngest of that name, for 'fault of a worse.

Nurse. You say well.

Mer. Yea! is the worst well? very well took, i'faith; wisely, wisely.

Nurse. If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

Ben. She will indite him to some supper.

Mer. A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

Rom. What hast thou found?

Mer. No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

An old hare hoar, and an old hare hoar,[24]
Is very good meat in lent:
But a hare that is hoar, is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.—

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner thither.

Rom. I will follow you.

then make a *pricke* in the character of the word on the left side." See 3 Henry VI., Act i. sc. 4, note 3.

[23] The preposition *for* is from the first quarto. The repetition of it by the Nurse shows that it was not rightly left out of the other old copies. H.

[24] *Hoar*, or hoary, is often used for *mouldy*, as things grow white from moulding. These lines seem to have been part of an old song. In the quarto of 1597, we have this stage direction: "*He walks by them and sings.*"

Mer. Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, lady, lady, lady.[25] [*Exeunt* MERCU. *and* BENVO.

Nurse. Marry, farewell! — I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?[26]

Rom. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk; and will speak more in a minute, than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse. An 'a speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirtgills; I am none of his skains-mates.[27] — And thou must stand by, too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

Pet. I saw no man use you at his pleasure: if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you. I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Nurse. Now, afore God, I am so vex'd, that

[25] The burthen of an old song. See Twelth Night, Act ii. sc. 3.

[26] *Ropery* appears to have been sometimes used in the sense of *roguery;* perhaps meaning *tricks* deserving the *rope*, that is, the gallows; as *rope-tricks*, in The Taming of the Shrew, Act i. sc. 2, note 10. So in The Three Ladies of London, 1584: "Thou art very pleasant, and full of thy *roperye*." — *Merchant* was often used as a term of abuse. See 1 Henry VI., Act ii. sc. 3. note 4. — The words, *Marry, farewell*, are from the quarto of 1597. H.

[27] By *skains-mates* the Nurse probably means *swaggering companions*. A *skain*, or *skean*, was an Irish knife or dagger, a weapon suitable to the purpose of ruffling fellows. Green, in his Quip for an Upstart Courtier, describes "an ill-favoured knave, who wore by his side a *skeine*, like a brewer's bung knife." Mr Dyce thinks this explanation "cannot be right, because the Nurse is evidently speaking of Mercutio's *female* companions." We do not quite see how this should be decisive. H.

every part about me quivers. — Scurvy knave! — 'Pray you, sir, a word; and, as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out: what she bade me say, I will keep to myself. But first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly, it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

Rom. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee, —

Nurse. Good heart! and, i'faith, I will tell her as much. Lord, Lord! she will be a joyful woman.

Rom. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse. I will tell her, sir, that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentleman-like offer.

Rom. Bid her devise some means to come to shrift
This afternoon;
And there she shall at friar Laurence' cell
Be shriv'd, and married. Here is for thy pains.

Nurse. No, truly, sir; not a penny.

Rom. Go to; I say you shall.

Nurse. This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

Rom. And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:
Within this hour my man shall be with thee,
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair,[23]
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.

[23] That is, like stairs of rope in the tackle of a ship. A *stair* or a *flight of stairs* was once common.

Farewell! — Be trusty, and I'll 'quite thy pains.
Farewell! — Commend me to thy mistress.

Nurse. Now, God in heaven bless thee! — Hark you, sir.

Rom. What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,
Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

Rom. I warrant thee; my man's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady — Lord, Lord! — when 'twas a little prating thing, — O! — There's a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lieve see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so she looks as pale as any clout in the varsal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

Rom. Ay, nurse; what of that? both with an R.

Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for the dog.[29] No; I know it begins with some other letter; and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

[29] The old copies read, "R is for the no;" *dog* having probably dropped out of the text. Tyrwhitt suggested the correction. —Ben Jonson, in his English Grammar, says "*R is the dog's letter*, and hirreth in the sound." And Nashe, in Summer's Last Will and Testament, 1600, speaking of dogs: "They *arre* and barke at night against the moone." And Barclay, in his Ship of Fooles, pleasantly exemplifies it:

> "This man malicious which troubled is with wrath,
> Nought els soundeth but the hoorse letter *R*,
> Though all be well, yet he none aunswere hath,
> Save the dogges letter glowming with *nar, nar.*'

Rom. Commend me to thy lady. [*Exit.*

Nurse. Ay, a thousand times. — Peter!

Pet. Anon.

Nurse. Peter, take my fan, and go before.[30]

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. Capulet's Garden.

Enter Juliet.

Jul. The clock struck nine, when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promis'd to return.
Perchance, she cannot meet him: that's not so. —
O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,[1]
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over lowering hills:
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey; and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours, — yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She'd be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me:
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

[30] So the first quarto; the later copies have merely, "Before and apace," instead of "Peter, take my fan, and go before." H.

[1] The speech is thus continued in the quarto of 1597:

"And run more swift than hasty powder fir'd
Doth hurry from the fearful cannon's mouth.
O, now she comes! Tell me, gentle nurse,
What says my 'eve?"

Enter the Nurse and PETER.

O God, she comes! — O, honey nurse! what news!
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit* PETER.

Jul. Now, good sweet nurse, — O Lord! why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou sham'st the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

Nurse. I am aweary, give me leave awhile. —
Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunt have I had!

Jul. I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; — good, good nurse, speak.

Nurse. Jesu, what haste! can you not stay awhile?
Do you not see, that I am out of breath?

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me, that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body, — though they be not to be talk'd on, yet they are past compare. He is not the flower of courtesy, — but I'll warrant him as gentle

as a lamb. — Go thy ways, wench: serve God. —
What! have you dined at home?

Jul. No, no: But all this did I know before;
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse. Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back! o' t'other side, — O, my back, my back —
Beshrew your heart, for sending me about,
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

Jul. I'faith, I am sorry that thou art not well:
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse. Your love says like an honest gentleman,
And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,
And, I warrant, a virtuous. — Where is your mother?

Jul. Where is my mother? — why, she is within,
Where should she be? How oddly thou repli'st!
"Your love says like an honest gentleman, —
Where is your mother?"

Nurse. O, God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow:
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

Jul. Here's such a coil! — Come, what says Romeo?

Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to friar Laurence cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks;
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love

Must climb a bird's nest soon, when it is dark:
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner: hie you to the cell.

Jul. Hie to high fortune! — honest nurse, farewell. [*Exeunt*

SCENE VI. Friar LAURENCE's Cell.

Enter Friar LAURENCE *and* ROMEO.

Fri. So smile the heavens upon this holy act,
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not!

Rom. Amen, amen! but, come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare;
It is enough I may but call her mine.

Fri. These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die; like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
And in the taste confounds the appetite:
Therefore, love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

Enter JULIET.

Here comes the lady: — O! so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint:[1]

[1] This scene was entirely rewritten after the first quarto, and in this place not improved. The passage originally stood thus:

"Youth's love is quick, swifter than swiftest speed.
See where she comes! —
So light a foot ne'er hurts the trodden flower:
Of love and joy, see, see, the sovereign power!"

A lover may bestride the gossamers
That idle in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.

Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Fri. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

Jul. As much to him, else are his thanks too much.

Rom. Ah, Juliet! if the measure of thy joy
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

Jul. Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Brags of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess,
I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.[2]

Fri. Come, come with me, and we will make short work;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,
Till holy Church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*

The hyperbole of *never wearing out the everlasting flint*, appears less beautiful than the lines as they were originally written, where the lightness of Juliet's motion is accounted for from the cheerfu effects the passion of love produced in her mind. H.

[2] The old copies read, "I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth," save that in the folio the second *sum* is printed *some* Steevens made the transposition, which is doubtless right. H.

ACT III.

SCENE I. A public Place.

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, *Page, and Servants.*

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire:
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Mer. Thou art like one of those fellows that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and says, "God send me no need of thee!" and, by the operation of the second cup, draws him on the drawer, when, indeed, there is no need.

Ben. Am I like such a fellow?

Mer. Come, come; thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy; and as soon mov'd to be moody, and as soon moody to be mov'd.

Ben. And what to?

Mer. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes: What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels, as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg, for quarrelling Thou hast quarrell'd with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with

a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

Ben. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

Mer. The fee simple? O simple!

Ben By my head, here come the Capulets.

Enter TYBALT, *and Others.*

Mer. By my heel, I care not.

Tyb. Follow me close, for I will speak to them. — Gentlemen, good den! a word with one of you.

Mer And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

Tyb. You will find me apt enough to that, sir, if you will give me occasion.

Mer. Could you not take some occasion without giving?

Tyb. Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo, —

Mer. Consort! what! dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort![1]

Ben. We talk here in the public haunt of men:
Either withdraw into some private place,
Or reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

Mer. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze:
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

[1] It should be remembered that *a consort* was the old term for a set or company of musicians.

Enter ROMEO.

Tyb. Well, peace be with you, sir! here comes my man.

Mer. But I'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery:
Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower;
Your worship, in that sense, may call him — man.

Tyb. Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford
No better term than this, — Thou art a villain.

Rom. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage
To such a greeting: — Villain am I none;
Therefore farewell; I see thou know'st me not.

Tyb. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore, turn and draw.

Rom. I do protest, I never injur'd thee;
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet, — which name I tender
As dearly as mine own, — be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
A la stoccata[2] carries it away. — [*Draws*
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What would'st thou have with me?

Mer. Good king of cats,[3] nothing, but one of your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher[4] by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

[2] The Italian term for a thrust or stab with a rapier.

[3] Alluding to his name. See Act ii. sc. 4, note 2.

[4] Warburton says that we should read *pilche*, which signifies a coat or covering of skin or leather; meaning the scabbard. The first quarto has *scabbard*.

Tyb. I am for you. [*Drawing.*

Rom. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

Mer. Come, sir, your passado. [*They fight.*

Rom. Draw, Benvolio:

Beat down their weapons. — Gentlemen, for shame
Forbear this outrage! — Tybalt, — Mercutio, —
The prince expressly hath forbid this bandying
In Verona streets. — Hold, Tybalt! — good Mercutio! [*Exeunt* TYBALT *and his Partizans.*

Mer. I am hurt; —
A plague o' both the houses! — I am sped: —
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

Ben. What! art thou hurt?

Mer. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough. —
Where is my page? — go, villain, fetch a surgeon. [*Exit Page.*

Rom. Courage, man! the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man.[5] I am pepper'd, I warrant, for this world: — A plague o' both your houses! — 'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic! — Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

[5] After this the quarto of 1597 continues Mercutio's speech as follows: "A pox of your houses! I shall be fairly mounted upon four men's shoulders, for your house of the Montagues and the Capulets; and then some peasantly rogue, some sexton, some base slave, shall write my epitaph, that Tybalt came and broke the prince's laws, and Mercutio was slain for the first and second cause. Where's the surgeon?

"*Boy.* He's come, sir.

"*Mer.* Now will he keep a mumbling in my guts on the other side. — Come, Benvolio; lend me thy hand. A pox of your houses!"

Rom. I thought all for the best.

Mer. Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. — A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me:
I have it, and soundly too: — Your houses!

[*Exeunt* MERCUTIO *and* BENVOLIO.

Rom. This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
With Tybalt's slander, Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my cousin;[6] — O, sweet Juliet!
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.

Re-enter BENVOLIO.

Ben. O Romeo, Romeo! brave Mercutio's dead;
That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

Rom. This day's black fate on more days doth depend;[7]
This but begins the woe, others must end.

Re-enter TYBALT.

Ben. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

Rom. Alive! in triumph![8] and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now! —
Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again,
That late thou gav'st me; for Mercutio's soul

[6] We have already had *cousin* in the sense of *kinsman*. The first quarto has *kinsman* here. H.

[7] This day's unhappy destiny *hangs over* the days yet to come. There will yet be more mischief.

[8] So the first quarto; the later copies, "*He gone* in triumph." — The later copies also have "fire *and* fury" instead of "fire-*ey'd* fury." — *Respective* is considerative. *Conduct* for *conductor*.

Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company:
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.
Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence.
Rom. This shall determine that.
[*They fight;* TYBALT *falls.*
Ben. Romeo, away! be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain:
Stand not amaz'd:—the prince will doom thee death,
If thou art taken.—Hence!—be gone!—away!
Rom. O! I am fortune's fool.
Ben. Why dost thou stay?
[*Exit* ROMEO.

Enter Citizens, &c.

1 *Cit.* Which way ran he, that kill'd Mercutio? Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?
Ben. There lies that Tybalt.
1 *Cit.* Up, sir; go with me:
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

Enter the Prince, attended; MONTAGUE, CAPULET, *their Wives, and Others.*

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray?
Ben. O, noble prince! I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.
Lady C. Tybalt, my cousin!—O, my brother's child!
O prince! O cousin! husband! O, the blood is spill'd

Of my dear kinsman! — Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!

Prin. Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

Ben. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;
Romeo, that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice the quarrel was,[9] and urg'd withal
Your high displeasure: — all this, uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt, deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast;[10]
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it. Romeo he cries aloud,
"Hold, friends! friends, part!" and, swifter than his tongue,
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,[11]
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm,
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled;
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to't they go like lightning; for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain;
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly:
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

[9] *Nice* here means *silly, trifling*.

[10] This small portion of untruth in Benvolio's narrative is finely conceived. — COLERIDGE. H.

[11] So the first quarto; the other old copies having *aged* instead of *agile*. H.

Lady C He is a kinsman to the Montague;
Affection makes him false, he speaks not true:
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give:
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

Prin. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio:
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

Mon. Not Romeo, prince; he was Mercutio's friend;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

Prin. And, for that offence,
Immediately we do exile him hence:
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding;
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding:
But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,
That you shall all repent the loss of mine.
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses,
Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste;
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body, and attend our will:
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.[12]

[*Exeunt*

[12] Dryden mentions a tradition, which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by Shakespeare, that *he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third Act, lest he should have been killed by him.* Yet he thinks him *no such formidable person, but that he might have lived through the play, and died in his bed,* without danger to the Poet. Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, that in a pointed sentence, more regard is commonly had to the words than the thought, and that it is very seldom to be rigorously understood. Mercutio's wit, gaiety, and courage, will always procure him friends that wish him a longer life; but his death is not precipitated, he has lived out the time allotted him in the construction of the play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakespeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies

SCENE II. A Room in Capulet's House.

Enter Juliet.

Jul. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' mansion;[1] such a wagoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately.—
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!
That Rumour's eyes may wink,[2] and Romeo

are perhaps out of the reach of Dryden; whose genius was not very fertile of merriment, nor ductile to humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive, and sublime. — Johnson.

[1] So the oldest copy; the later copies having *lodging* instead of *mansion*. Only the first four lines of this speech are in the quarto of 1597. H.

[2] Few passages in Shakespeare, perhaps none, have caused more editorial comment than this. The old copies have *runaways* instead of *Rumour's*, or *Rumoures*, as the word would then have been printed. Several corrections have been proposed, but *Rumour's* seems the most satisfactory. Heath was the first to suggest it. Singer, also, without any knowledge, as he assures us, of Heath's thought, recently hit upon *rumourers'*. The two are so nearly alike, that they may well enough pass for a coincideuce of thought. Finally, Mr. White, of New York, tells us he had pitched upon *Rumour's*, before he was aware that any one else had thought of the word. He discusses the point at much length, in his Shakespeare's Scholar, and, we think, justifies the change as fully, perhaps, as the nature of the case can well admit. The Poet has personified Rumour in the Induction to 2 Henry IV.; and in his time she was supposed, like Virgil's Fama, to have eyes as well as tongues. In support of the change, Mr. White aptly quotes the following, from an Entertainment given to King James, March 15th, 1603, by Dekker: "Directly under her, in a cart by herselfe, Fame stood upright; a woman in a watchet roabe, thickly set with *open eyes* and tongues, a payre of large golden winges at her backe, a trumpet in her hand, a mantle of sundry cullours traversing her body: all these ensigns displaying but the propertie of her swiftnesse and aptnesse to disperse *Rumoure*." Collier's second folio has "*enemies'* eyes;" the objection to which is, that from the nature of the case *all* eyes, as well of friends as of enemies, are required to be closed, so that Romeo's visit may be absolutely unknown, save to those already privy to it. Of

Leap to these arms, untalk'd-of and unseen!—
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night.—Come, civil night,[3]
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:
Hood my unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks,[4]
With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,
Think true love acted, simple modesty.
Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.[5]
Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,[6]

course the theory of the reading in the text is, that Rumour, personified, represents the power of human observation; and that Juliet longs to have night come, when the eyes of Rumour shall be shut in sleep, so as to take in nothing for her tongues to work with; because, as things now stand, the lovers can meet and know each other as man and wife, only when the eye of observation is closed or withdrawn. It may be well to add, as lending *some* support to *Rumour's*, that Brooke's poem has a similar personification of *Report*. It is where Juliet is questioning with herself as to whether Romeo's "bent of love be honourable, his purpose marriage:"

"So, I defylde, *Report* shall take her trompe of blacke defame,
Whence she with puffed cheeke shall blowe a blast so shrill
Of my disprayse, that with the noyse Verona shall she fill."
H.

[3] *Civil* is grave, solemn.

[4] These are terms of falconry. An *unmanned* hawk is one that is not brought to endure company. *Bating* is fluttering or beating the wings as striving to fly away.

[5] The old copies till the second folio have *upon* instead of *on*. *Upon* overfills the measure; and the undated quarto remedies this by omitting *new*. H.

[6] So the undated quarto; the other old copies, "when *I* shall die" H

Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.[7] —
O! I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possess'd it; and, though I am sold,
Not yet enjoy'd. So tedious is this day,
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child, that hath new robes,
And may not wear them. O! here comes my nurse,

Enter the Nurse, with Cords.

And she brings news; and every tongue, that speaks
But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence. —
Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords,
That Romeo bade thee fetch?

Nurse. [*Throwing them down.*] Ay, ay, the cords.

Jul. Ah me! what news? why dost thou wring thy hands?

Nurse. Ah well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!
We are undone, lady, we are undone! —
Alack the day! — he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

Jul. Can Heaven be so envious?

Nurse. Romeo can,
Though Heaven cannot. — O Romeo, Romeo! —
Who ever would have thought it? — Romeo!

Jul. What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus?
This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but *I*,[8]

[7] *Garish* is *gaudy, glittering.*

[8] In Shakespeare's time the affirmative particle *ay* was usually written *I*, and here it is necessary to retain the old spelling.

And that bare vowel *I* shall poison more
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice :[9]
I am not I, if there be such an *I;*
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, *I.*
If he be slain, say, *I;* or, if not, no:
Brief sounds determine of my weal, or woe.

Nurse. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes, —
God save the mark! — here on his manly breast
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse;
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,
All in gore blood; — I swounded at the sight.

Jul. O break, my heart! — poor bankrupt, break at once!
To prison, eyes! ne'er look on liberty!
Vile earth, to earth resign; end motion here;
And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier!

Nurse. O, Tybalt, Tybalt! the best friend I had:
O, courteous Tybalt! honest gentleman!
That ever I should live to see thee dead!

Jul. What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd? and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-lov'd cousin,[10] and my dearer lord? —
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
For who is living, if those two are gone?

Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished:
Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.

Jul. O God! — did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

Nurse. It did, it did; alas the day! it did.

[9] The *cockatrice* is the same as the *basilisk.* We have already met with the "beast" under the latter name. See 2 Henry VI., Act iii. sc. 2, note 2; and King Richard III., Act iv. sc. 1, note 5 H.

[10] So the first quarto; the later copies have *dearest* instead of *dear-lov'd.* H

Jul. O, serpent heart, hid with a flowering face
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!
Despised substance of divinest show!
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st;
A damned saint,[11] an honourable villain!—
O, nature! what hadst thou to do in hell,
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book, containing such vile matter,
So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

Nurse. There's no trust,
No faith, no honesty in men; all perjur'd,
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.—
Ah! where's my man? give me some *aqua vitæ:*
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
Shame come to Romeo!

Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue,
For such a wish![12] he was not born to shame:
Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit;
For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth.
O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse. Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord! what tongue shall smooth thy name,[13]

[11] So the undated quarto: the other old copies have *dim* instead of *damned*. H.

[12] Note the Nurse's mistake of the mind's audible struggles with itself for its decision *in toto*.—COLERIDGE. H.

[13] To *smooth* is to *speak fair*; it is here metaphorically used for to mitigate or assuage the asperity of censure with which Romeo's name would be now mentioned.

When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it? —
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband:
All this is comfort; wherefore weep I, then?
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;
But, O! it presses to my memory,
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo — banished!"
That — "banished," that one word — "banished,"
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.[14] Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or, — if sour woe delights in fellowship,
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs, —
Why follow'd not, when she said, Tybalt's dead,
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
Which modern lamentation might have mov'd?[15]
But, with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
"Romeo is banished!" — to speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead: — "Romeo is banished!" —
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word's death; no words can that woe sound. —
Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

[14] That is, is worse than the loss of ten thousand Tybalts.

[15] *Modern* is trite, common. So in As You Like It: "Full of wise saws and *modern* instances."

Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.
Jul. Wash they his wounds with tears? mine shall be spent,
When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
Take up those cords. — Poor ropes, you are beguil'd,
Both you and I, for Romeo is exil'd:
He made you for a highway to my bed,
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
Come, cords; come, nurse: I'll to my wedding bed;
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!
Nurse. Hie to your chamber; I'll find Romeo
To comfort you: — I wot well where he is.
Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night:
I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.
Jul. O, find him! give this ring to my true knight,
And bid him come to take his last farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. Friar LAURENCE's Cell.

Enter Friar LAURENCE *and* ROMEO.

Fri. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man:
Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
And thou art wedded to calamity.
Rom. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?
What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?
Fri. Too familiar
Is my dear son with such sour company:
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.
Rom. What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?

Fri. A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips;
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. Ha! banishment? be merciful, say, death;
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say, banishment.

Fri. Hence from Verona art thou banished:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Rom. There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence-banished is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death: — then, banished
Is death misterm'd: calling death banishment,[1]
Thou cut'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.

Fri. O, deadly sin! O, rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment:
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

Rom. 'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here
Where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven, and may look on her,
But Romeo may not. — More validity,[2]
More honourable state, more courtship lives
In carrion flies, than Romeo: they may seize

[1] So the first quarto; the later copies, *banished* instead of *banishment*. H.

[2] *Validity* is often employed to signify *worth, value*. See King Lear, Act i. sc. 1, note 13. By *courtship, courtesy, courtly behaviour* is meant. Bullokar defines "compliment to be ceremony, *court-ship*, fine behaviour." So in Ford's Fancies Chaste and Noble:

> "Whilst the young lord of Telamon, her husband,
> Was packeted to France, to study *courtship*,
> Under, forsooth, a colour of employment"

On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
And steal immortal blessing from her lips;
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
But Romeo may not, he is banished.
This may flies do, when I from this must fly:
And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?[3]
Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
But — banished — to kill me? Banished!
O friar! the damned use that word in hell;
Howlings attend it: How hast thou the heart,
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
To mangle me with that word, banished?

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.[4]

Rom. O! thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

Rom. Yet banished? — Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,

[3] We here follow the arrangement of the first folio, except that we transpose the line, "But Romeo may not, he is banished;" which is there evidently misplaced after the line, "This may flies do, when I from this must fly." The quartos of 1599 and 1609 jumble various readings together thus:

> "This may flies do, when I from this must fly:
> And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?
> But Romeo may not, he is banished.
> Flies may do this, but I from this must fly:
> They are free men, but I am banished." H.

[4] So the oldest copy: the later copies have *Then* instead of *Thou*, and "hear me *a little* speak," instead of "hear me *but* speak *a word*." — *Fond* here means *foolish:* often so used.

H

Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,
It helps not, it prevails not: talk no more.

Fri. O! then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?

Fri. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

Rom. Thou canst not speak of what thou dost not feel:
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
Doting like me, and like me banished;
Then might'st thou speak, then might'st thou tear thy hair,
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

Fri. Arise; one knocks: good Romeo, hide thyself. [*Knocking within*

Rom. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes. [*Knocking.*

Fri. Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—Romeo, arise;
Thou wilt be taken.—Stay awhile.—Stand up; [*Knocking.*
Run to my study.—By and by:—God's will!
What wilfulness is this!—I come, I come. [*Knocking*
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your will?

Nurse. [*Within.*] Let me come in, and you shall know my errand:
I come from Lady Juliet.

Fri. Welcome, then.

Enter the Nurse.

Nurse. O, holy friar! O, tell me! holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

Fri. There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

Nurse. O, he is even in my mistress' case;
Just in her case!

Fri. O, woful sympathy!
Piteous predicament![5]

Nurse. Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.—
Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;
Why should you fall into so deep an O?

Rom. Nurse!

Nurse. Ah sir! ah sir! — Death is the end of all.

Rom. Spak'st thou of Juliet? how is it with her?
Doth she not think me an old murderer,
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
With blood remov'd but little from her own?
Where is she? and how doth she? and what says
My conceal'd lady[6] to our cancell'd love?

Nurse. O! she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;
And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
And then falls down again.

Rom. As if that name,
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,

[5] The old copies make these words a part of the Nurse's speech. They were assigned to the Friar, at Farmer's suggestion. H.

[6] The epithet *concealed* is to be understood, not of the person but of the condition of the lady.

Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
Murder'd her kinsman.—O! tell me, friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his Sword.*

Fri. Hold thy desperate hand
Art thou a man? thy form cries out, thou art;
Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
The unreasonable fury of a beast:
Unseemly woman, in a seeming man!
Or ill-beseeming beast, in seeming both![7]
Thou hast amaz'd me: by my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,
By doing damned hate upon thyself?
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?
Since birth and heaven and earth all three do meet
In thee at once; which thou at once would'st lose.
Fie, fie! thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
Which, like an usurer, abound'st in all,
And usest none in that true use indeed
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
Digressing from the valour of a man;
Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish;
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,

[7] Shakespeare has here followed Brooke's poem:

"*Art thou, quoth he, a man? thy shape saith, so thou art,*
Thy crying and thy weping eyes denote a womans hart:
For manly reason is quite from of thy mynd outchased,
And in her stead affections lewd, and fancies highly placed;
So that I stoode in doute this howre at the least,
If thou a man or woman wert, or else a brutish beast."

Misshapen in the conduct of them both,
Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,
Is set a-fire by thine own ignorance,[8]
And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.[9]
What! rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,
But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too
The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,
And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:
A pack of blessings lights upon thy back;
Happiness courts thee in her best array;
But, like a misbehav'd and sullen wench,
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her,
But look, thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation. —
Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,

[8] To understand the force of this allusion, it should be remembered that the ancient English soldiers, using match locks, instead of locks with flints, as at present, were obliged to carry a lighted *match* hanging at their belts, very near to the wooden *flask* in which they carried their powder. The same allusion occurs in Humor's Ordinary, an old collection of English Epigrams:

"When she his *flask* and touch-box set on fire,
And till this hour the burning is not out."

[9] And thou torn to pieces with thine own weapons.

Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:
Romeo is coming.

Nurse. O Lord! I could have stay'd here all the night,
To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!—
My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

Rom. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide

Nurse. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir.
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. [*Exit*

Rom. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this!

Fri. Go hence: Good night; and here stands all your state:[10]
Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguis'd from hence.
Sojourn in Mantua; I'll find out your man,
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap to you, that chances here.
Give me thy hand; 'tis late: farewell; good night.

Rom. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee:
Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Room in CAPULET'S House.

Enter CAPULET, *Lady* CAPULET, *and* PARIS.

Cap. Things have fallen out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter
Look you, she lov'd her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And so did I:—Well, we were born to die.—
'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night:
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

[10] The whole of your fortune depends on this.

Par. These times of woe afford no time to woo.
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter
Lady C. I will, and know her mind early to-morrow;
To-night she's mew'd up to her heaviness.
Cap. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love:[1] I think she will be rul'd
In all respects by me; nay, more, I doubt it not.
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love;
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next —
But, soft! What day is this?
Par. Monday, my lord.
Cap. Monday? ha! ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon;
O' Thursday let it be: — o' Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl. —
Will you be ready? do you like this haste?
We'll keep no great ado; — a friend, or two; —
For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,
Being our kinsman, if we revel much:
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?
Par. My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.
Cap. Well, get you gone: — O' Thursday be it then. —
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed;
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day. —
Farewell, my lord. — Light to my chamber, ho!

Desperate means only *bold, adventurous*, as if he had said in the vulgar phrase, I will speak a *bold* word, *and venture* to promise you my daughter. — JOHNSON.

Afore me . it is so very late, that we
May call it early by and by.—Good night.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. JULIET's Chamber.[1]

Enter ROMEO *and* JULIET

Jul. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yond' pomegranate tree.[2]
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,[3]

[1] The stage direction in the first edition is, "*Enter Romeo and Juliet at a Window.*" In the second quarto, "*Enter Romeo and Juliet aloft.*" They appeared, probably, in the balcony which was erected on the old English stage.

[2] A writer in the Pictorial Shakespeare gives the following on this passage: "Amongst the fruit-bearing trees, the pomegranate is in some respects the most beautiful; and therefore, in the South of Europe, and in the East, it has become the chief ornament of the garden. But where did Shakespeare find that the nightingale haunted the pomegranate tree, pouring forth her song from the same bough, week after week? Doubtless in some old travels with which he was familiar. Chaucer puts his nightingale in 'a fresh green laurel tree;' but the preference of the nightingale for the pomegranate is unquestionable. 'The nightingale sings from the pomegranate groves in the day-time,' says Russel, in his account of Aleppo. A friend, whose observations as a traveller are as acute as his descriptions are graphic and forcible, informs us that throughout his journeys in the East he never heard such a choir of nightingales as in a row of pomegranate trees that skirt the road from Smyrna to Boudjia." H.

[3] This office of the lark is choicely set forth by old Chaucer: the passage may be seen in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act iii. sc. 2, note 29. Shakespeare has glorified the subject with special power, in Venus and Adonis:

> "Lo! here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
> From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
> And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
> The sun ariseth in his majesty;
> Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
> The cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold." H.

No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Jul. Yond' light is not daylight; I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,[4]
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say, yon gray is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's bow;[5]
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:
I have more care to stay, than will to go:—
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.—
How is't, my soul? let's talk, it is not day.[6]

[4] So in Sidney's Arcadia: "The *moon*, then full (not thinking scorn to be a *torch-bearer* to such beauty) guided her steps." And Sir John Davies's Orchestra, speaking of the Sun:

> "When the great *torch-bearer* of heaven was gone
> Downe in a maske unto the ocean's court."

[5] All the old copies have *brow* instead of *bow*. The happy change is made in Mr. Collier's second folio; and Mr. Singer says the same is done in his second folio. H.

[6] The quarto of 1597 gives this speech in a form which the Poet will hardly be thought to have improved; thus:

> "Let me stay here, let me be ta'en, and die;
> If thou wilt have it so, I am content.
> I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,
> It is the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
> I'll say it is the nightingale that beats
> The vaulty heaven so far above our heads,
> And not the lark, the messenger of morn:
> Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so,—
> What says my love? let's talk, 'tis not yet day."

Jul. It is, it is; hie hence, be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords, and unpleasing sharps.
Some say, the lark makes sweet division;[7]
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say, the lark and loathed toad chang'd eyes;[8]
O! now I would they had chang'd voices too,
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.[9]
O! now be gone: more light and light it grows.

Rom. More light and light?—more dark and dark our woes.

Enter the Nurse.

Nurse. Madam!

Jul. Nurse.

Nurse. Your lady mother's coming to your chamber:
The day is broke; be wary, look about. [*Exit.*

Jul. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Rom. Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend. [ROMEO *descends.*

[7] *A division,* in music, is *a variation* upon some fundamental air.

[8] The toad having very fine eyes and the lark very ugly ones, was the occasion of a common saying that *the toad and the lark had changed eyes.* The *croak* of the toad would have been no indication of the appearance of day, and consequently no signal for her lover's departure.

[9] The *hunt's up* was originally a tune played to wake sportsmen, and call them together. It was a common burthen of hunting ballads. Puttenham says that one Gray grew into good estimation with the Duke of Somerset for making certain merry ballads, whereof one chiefly was *the hunte is up, the hunte is up.* According to Cotgrave the *Reveille,* or morning song to a new married woman, was called the *hunt's up.* So Drayton, in his Poly-Olbion: "But *hunt's up* to the morn the feather'd sylvans sing." And in his third Eclogue: "Time plays the *hunt's up* to thy sleepy head."

Jul. Art thou gone so? love! lord! ay, husband, friend!
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days:
O! by this count I shall be much in years,
Ere I again behold my Romeo.

Rom. Farewell! I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Jul. O! think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

Rom. I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Jul. O God! I have an ill-divining soul:[10]
Methinks, I see thee, now thou art so low,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

Rom. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you.
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu! adieu!
[*Exit.*

Jul. O, fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle.
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.

Lady C. [*Within.*] Ho, daughter! are you up?

Jul. Who is't that calls? is it my lady mother?
Is she not down so late, or up so early?
What unaccustom'd cause procures her hither?

[10] This miserable prescience of futurity I have always regarded as a circumstance peculiarly beautiful. The same kind of warning from the mind, Romeo seems to have been conscious of on his going to the entertainment at the house of Capulet:

"My mind misgives me,
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
From this night's revels." STEEVENS.

Enter Lady CAPULET.

Lady C. Why, how now, Juliet?

Jul. Madam, I am not well.

Lady C. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?

What! wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?

An if thou could'st, thou could'st not make him live;

Therefore have done. Some grief shows much of love;

But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

Jul. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

Lady C. So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend

Which you weep for.

Jul. Feeling so the loss,

I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

Lady C. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,

As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

Jul. What villain, madam?

Lady C. That same villain, Romeo

Jul. Villain and he are many miles asunder.

God pardon him! I do with all my heart;

And yet no man, like he, doth grieve my heart.

Lady C. That is, because the traitor murderer lives.

Jul. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands.

Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!

Lady C. We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:

Then, weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,—

Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,—

Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram,[11]
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company;
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

Jul. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him — dead —
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vex'd. —
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet. — O! how my heart abhors
To hear him nam'd, — and cannot come to him, —
To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt[12]
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!

Lady C. Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.
But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

Jul. And joy comes well in such a needful time.
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

Lady C. Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child;
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.

Jul. Madam, in happy time,[13] what day is that?

Lady C. Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,

[1] So all the old copies but the first quarto, which reads thus: 'That should bestow on him so sure a draught." This reading, with *should* changed to *shall*, has been commonly adopted in the modern text. H.

[12] In this line, *Tybalt* was first supplied in the folio of 1632 It improves the metre, though nowise necessary to the sense. H.

[13] *A la bonne heure.* This phrase was interjected when the hearer was not so well pleased as the speaker. — JOHNSON.

The county Paris,[14] at St. Peter's church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

Jul. Now, by St. Peter's church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
I wonder at this haste; that I must wed
Ere he that should be husband comes to woo.
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris.—These are news indeed![15]

Lady C. Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.

Enter CAPULET *and the Nurse.*

Cap. When the sun sets, the earth doth drizzle dew;[16]
But, for the sunset of my brother's son,
It rains downright.—
How now! a conduit,[17] girl? what! still in tears?
Evermore showering? In one little body
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind;
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,

[14] *County*, or *countie*, was the usual term for an earl in Shakespeare's time. Paris is in this play first styled a *young earle*.

[15] In Mr. Collier's second folio, the words, "These are news indeed!" are transferred to Lady Capulet, and made a part of the next speech. The change, though not necessary to the sense, seems well worthy of being considered. H.

[16] This is scientifically true; though, poetically, it would seem better to read *air* instead of *earth*. And, in fact, some modern editions do read *air*, alleging the undated quarto as authority for it; but such, it seems, is not the case. A line has been justly quoted from The Rape of Lucrece as supporting *earth*: "But as the *earth* doth *weep*, the *sun being set*." H.

[17] The same image, which was in frequent use with Shakespeare's contemporaries, occurs in Brooke's poem: "His sighs are stopt, and stopped in the *conduit* of his tears"

Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
Who, — raging with thy tears, and they with them, —
Without a sudden calm, will overset
Thy tempest-tossed body. — How now, wife!
Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

Lady C. Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.

I would the fool were married to her grave!

Cap. Soft! take me with you, take me with you, wife.[18]

How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? doth she not count her bless'd,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Jul. Not proud you have, but thankful that you have:

Proud can I never be of what I hate;
But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

Cap. How now! how now, chop-logic![19] What is this?

Proud, — and, I thank you, — and, I thank you not; —
And yet not proud: — Mistress minion, you!
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,

[18] That is, *let me understand you;* like the Greek phrase, "Let me go along with you." — Coleridge here exclaims, — "A noble scene! Don't I see it with my own eyes? — Yes! but not with Juliet's. And observe in Capulet's last speech in this scene his mistake, as if love's causes were capable of being generalized."
H.

[19] Capulet uses this as a nickname. "Choplogyk is he that whan his mayster rebuketh his servaunt for his defawtes, he will give him xx wordes for one, or elles he will bydde the devylles paternoster in scvlence." — *The xxiiii Orders of Knaves.*

To go with Paris to St. Peter's church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!
You tallow face![20]

Lady C. Fie, fie! what! are you mad?

Jul. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Cap. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!
I tell thee what, — get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face.
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;
My fingers itch. — Wife, we scarce thought us bless'd,
That God had sent us but this only child;
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her.
Out on her, hilding![21]

Nurse. God in heaven bless her! —
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

Cap. And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,
Good prudence: smatter with your gossips; go.

Nurse. I speak no treason.

Cap. O, God ye good den!

Nurse. May not one speak?

Cap. Peace, you mumbling fool!
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,
For here we need it not.

[20] In the age of Shakespeare, authors not only employed these terms of abuse in their original performances, but even in their versions of the most chaste and elegant of the Greek or Roman poets. Stanyhurst, the translator of Virgil, in 1582, makes Dido call Æneas *hedge-brat, cullion,* and *tar-breech,* in the course of one speech.

[21] *Hilding* was a common term of reproach; meaning some thing vile. See The Taming of the Shrew, Act ii. sc. 1, note 1

Lady C. You are too hot.

Cap. God's bread! it makes me mad.
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her match'd;[22] and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly-train'd,[23]
Stuff'd (as they say) with honourable parts,
Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man,—
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet,[24] in her fortune's tender,
To answer, "I'll not wed, —I cannot love,
I am too young, —I pray you, pardon me."—
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me;
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i'the streets,
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good.
Trust to't, bethink you; I'll not be forsworn. [*Exit.*

Jul. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,

[22] Such is the reading of all the old copies except the first, by the help of which a third reading has been manufactured in divers modern editions. We subjoin the passage as there given:

> "God's blessed mother, wife, it mads me:
> Day, night, early, late, at home, abroad,
> Alone, in company, waking or sleeping,
> Still my care hath been to see her match'd." H.

[23] *Train'd* is from the quarto of 1597: that of 1599 has *liand;* the other old copies, *allied.* — In the second line after, the first quarto has *heart could* instead of *thought would,* which is the reading of all the other old copies. H.

[24] *Mammet* has been explained in 1 Henry IV., Act ii. sc. 3 note 9. The explanation there given has been disputed, but is confirmed by the use of the word in this place. H.

That sees into the bottom of my grief? —
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

Lady C. Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word.
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*

Jul. O God! — O nurse! how shall this be prevented?
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth? — comfort me, counsel me. —
Alack, alack! that Heaven should practise stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself! —
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse.

Nurse. Faith, here 'tis: Romeo
Is banished; and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
O, he's a lovely gentleman![25]
Romeo's a dishclout to him: an eagle, madam,

[25] The character of the Nurse exhibits a just picture of those whose actions have no principles for their foundation. She has been unfaithful to the trust reposed in her by Capulet, and is ready to embrace any expedient that offers, to avert the consequences of her first infidelity. The picture is not, however, an original; the nurse in the poem exhibits the same readiness to accommodate herself to the present conjuncture. Sir John Vanbrugh, in The Relapse, has copied, in this respect, the character of his nurse from Shakespeare.

Hath not so green,[26] so quick, so fair an eye,
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
I think you are happy in this second match,
For it excels your first; or, if it did not,
Your first is dead; or 'twere as good he were.
As living here, and you no use of him.

Jul. Speakest thou from thy heart?

Nurse. And from my soul too; or else beshrew them both.

Jul. Amen!

Nurse. What?

Jul. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.
Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,
Having displeas'd my father, to Laurence' cell,
To make confession, and to be absolv'd.

Nurse. Marry, I will; and this is wisely done. [*Exit.*

Jul. Ancient damnation! O, most wicked fiend!
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath prais'd him with above compare
So many thousand times? — Go, counsellor;
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain. —
I'll to the friar, to know his remedy;
If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*

[26] Chaucer, in The Knightes Tale, says of Emetrius, — "His nose was high, his *eyen* bright *citrin*;" which probably means that his eyes had the colour of an unripe lemon or *citron*. So, Fletcher, in The Two Noble Kinsmen: "O! vouchsafe with that thy rare *green* eye." And Lord Bacon says that "eyes somewhat large, and the circles of them inclined to *greenness*, are signs of long life" H.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Friar LAURENCE's Cell.

Enter Friar LAURENCE *and* PARIS.

Fri. On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.
Par. My father Capulet will have it so;
And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste.[1]
Fri. You say you do not know the lady's mind:
Uneven is the course; I like it not.
Par. Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death.
And therefore have I little talk'd of love;
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous,
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway;
And in his wisdom hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears;
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society.
Now do you know the reason of this haste.
Fri. [*Aside.*] I would I knew not why it should be slow'd.[2] —
Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

Enter JULIET.

Par. Happily met, my lady, and my wife!
Jul. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

[1] The meaning of Paris is clear; he does not wish to restrain Capulet, or to delay his own marriage; *there is nothing of slowness in me, to induce me to slacken his haste:* but the words given him seem rather to mean *I am not backward in restraining his haste.* In the first edition the line ran: "And I am nothing *slack* to slow his haste."

[2] To *slow* and to *foreslow* were anciently in common use.

Par. That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.

Jul. What must be shall be.

Fri. That's a certain text.

Par. Come you to make confession to this father?

Jul. To answer that, I should confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you that I love him.

Par. So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

Jul. If I do so, it will be of more price
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

Par. Poor soul, thy face is much abus'd with tears.

Jul. The tears have got small victory by that;
For it was bad enough before their spite.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

Jul. That is no slander, sir, that is a truth;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

Par. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

Jul. It may be so, for it is not mine own. —
Are you at leisure, holy father, now,
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?[3]

Fri. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now. —
My lord, we must intreat the time alone.

Par. God shield, I should disturb devotion! —
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse you:
Till then, adieu! and keep this holy kiss. [*Exit.*

Jul. O, shut the door! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help!

Fri. Ah, Juliet! I already know thy grief;

[3] Juliet means *vespers*; there is no such thing as *evening mass*

It strains me past the compass of my wits:
I hear thou must, and nothing must prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.

Jul. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I'll help it presently.
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
Shall be the label to another deed,[4]
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both.
Therefore, out of thy long-experienc'd time,
Give me some present counsel; or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

Fri. Hold, daughter! I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry county Paris,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake
A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That cop'st with death himself to 'scape from it;
And, if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

Jul. O! bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,

[4] The seals of deeds formerly were appended on distinct slips or labels affixed to the deed. Hence in King Richard II. the Duke of York discovers a covenant, which his son the Duke of Aumerle had entered in o, by the depending seal.

From off the battlements of yonder tower;[5]
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;
Or hide me nightly in a charnel-house,
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless skulls;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;[6]
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble;
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

Fri. Hold, then: go home, be merry, give consent
To marry Paris. Wednesday is to-morrow;
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber:
Take thou this phial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off;
When, presently, through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour; for no pulse
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease:[7]

[5] So the first quarto; the other old copies, "*any* tower." — In the second line below, the first quarto reads thus:

"Or chain me to some steepy mountain's top,
Where roaring bears and savage lions are." H.

[6] So the undated quarto: the folio of 1623 has *grave* instead of *shroud:* the quartos of 1599 and 1609 have nothing after *his*, thus leaving the sense incomplete. The first quarto gives the line thus: "Or lay me in a tomb with one new dead." — Instead of the last line in this speech, the quarto of 1597 has the following:

"To keep myself a faithful unstain'd wife
To my dear lord, my dearest Romeo." H.

[7] In the first quarto, where this whole speech extends only to fourteen lines, we have the following, which is in some respects better than the reading of the other old copies:

No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes;[8] thy eyes' windows fall,
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
Each part, depriv'd of supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt remain full two-and-forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead
Then, as the manner of our country is,
In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier,[9]
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift;
And hither shall he come, and he and I
Will watch thy waking, and that very night
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
And this shall free thee from this present shame,
If no unconstant toy nor womanish fear
Abate thy valour in the acting it.

Jul. Give me, give me! O, tell me not of fear!

Fri. Hold; get you gone; be strong and prosperous

> "A dull and heavy slumber, which shall seize
> Each vital spirit; for no pulse shall keep
> His natural progress, but surcease to beat." H.

[8] So the undated quarto: the other old copies have *many* instead of *paly;* except the second folio, which has *mealy.* H.

[9] The Italian custom here alluded to, of carrying the dead body to the grave richly dressed, and with the face *uncovered,* Shakespeare found particularly described in Brooke's poem:

> "An other use there is, that whosoever dyes,
> Borne to their church, *with open face upon the beere he lyes.*
> *In wonted weed attyrde, not wrapt in winding sheete.*"

In this resolve: I'll send a friar with speed
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

Jul. Love, give me strength! and strength shall help afford.
Farewell, dear father! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. A Room in CAPULET's House.

Enter CAPULET, *Lady* CAPULET, *the Nurse, and Servants.*

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ.—
[*Exit Servant.*
Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.[1]

2 *Serv.* You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try if they can lick their fingers.

[1] Cooking was an art of great esteem in Shakespeare's time, as indeed it is likely to be, so long as men keep up the habit of eating. Ben Jonson's description of "a master cook," too long to be quoted here, is a specimen of the humourous sublime not apt to be forgotten by any one that has feasted upon it. The Poet has been suspected of an oversight or something worse, in making Capulet give order here for so many "cunning cooks;" whereupon the pictorial edition defends him thus: "Old Capulet, in his exuberant spirits at his daughter's approaching marriage, calls for 'twenty' of these artists. The critics think this too large a number. Ritson says, with wonderful simplicity, — 'Either Capulet had altered his mind strangely, or our author forgot what he had just made him tell us.' This is indeed to understand the Poet with admirable exactness. The passage is entirely in keeping with Shakespeare's habit of hitting off a character almost by a word. Capulet is evidently a man of ostentation; but his ostentation, as is most generally the case, is covered with a thin veil of affected indifference. In the first Act he says to his guests, — 'We have a trifling foolish banquet toward.' In the third Act, when he settles the day of Paris' marriage, he just hints, — 'We'll keep no great ado; — a friend, or two.' But Shakespeare knew that these indications of 'the pride which apes humility' were not inconsistent with the 'twenty cooks,' — the regret that 'we shall be much unfurnish'd for this time,' and the solicitude expressed in, Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica.'" H.

Cap. How canst thou try them so?

2 *Serv.* Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers:[2] therefore, he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.

Cap. Go, begone.— [*Exit Servant.*

We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time.—

What! is my daughter gone to friar Laurence?

Nurse. Ay, forsooth.

Cap. Well, he may chance to do some good on her:

A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

Enter JULIET.

Nurse. See, where she comes from shrift with merry look.

Cap. How now, my headstrong! where have you been gadding?

Jul. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin

Of disobedient opposition

To you and your behests; and am enjoin'd

By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,

And beg your pardon.—Pardon, I beseech you!

Henceforward I am ever rul'd by you.

Cap. Send for the county: go tell him of this.

I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

Jul. I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell;

And gave him what becomed love I might,[3]

Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

[2] This adage is in Puttenham's Arte of English Poesie, 1589:

"As the olde cocke crowes so doeth the chicke:
A bad cooke that cannot his owne fingers lick."

[3] *Becomed* for *becoming*. The old writers furnish many such instances of the active and passive forms used interchangeably. H.

Cap. Why, I am glad on't; this is well,—stand up:
This is as't should be.—Let me see the county:
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound to him.

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit, to furnish me to-morrow?

Lady C. No, not till Thursday: there is time enough.

Cap. Go, nurse, go with her.—We'll to church to-morrow. [*Exeunt* JULIET *and Nurse.*

Lady C. We shall be short in our provision:
'Tis now near night.

Cap. Tush! I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife.
Go thou to Juliet; help to deck up her:
I'll not to bed to-night;—let me alone;
I'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho!—
They are all forth: well, I will walk myself
To county Paris, to prepare up him
Against to-morrow. My heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. JULIET'S Chamber.

Enter JULIET *and the Nurse.*

Jul. Ay, those attires are best:—But, gentle nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;
For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter Lady CAPULET.

Lady C. What! are you busy, ho? need you my help?

Jul. No, madam; we have cull'd such necessaries
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow:
So please you, let me now be left alone,
And let the nurse this night sit up with you;
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
In this so sudden business.

Lady C. Good night:
Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt Lady* CAPULET *and Nurse.*

Jul. Farewell! — God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life:
I'll call them back again to comfort me. —
Nurse! — What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone. —
Come, phial. —
What if this mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married, then, to-morrow morning? —
No, no; — this shall forbid it: — lie thou there. —

[*Laying down a Dagger.*[1]

What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd, to have me dead,
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear, it is; and yet, methinks, it should not,

[1] "Daggers," says Gifford, "or, as they are commonly called, knives, were worn at all times by every woman in England; whether they were so in Italy, Shakespeare, I believe, never inquired, and I cannot tell."

For he hath still been tried a holy man:
I will not entertain so bad a thought.[2] —
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point!
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place, —
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;[3]

[2] This line, found only in the quarto of 1597, is retained, as making the sense more complete. — We subjoin the whole of this speech as it stands in the first quarto, that the reader may observe with what growth of power it was afterwards worked out by the Poet:

"Farewell: God knows when we shall meet again.
Ah! I do take a fearful thing in hand.
What if this potion should not work at all,
Must I of force be married to the county?
This shall forbid it: knife, lie thou there.
What if the friar should give me this drink
To poison me, for fear I should disclose
Our former marriage? Ah! I wrong him much;
He is a holy and religious man:
I will not entertain so bad a thought.
What if I should be stifled in the tomb?
Awake an hour before the appointed time?
Ah! then I fear I shall be lunatic;
And, playing with my dead forefathers' bones,
Dash out my frantic brains. Methinks, I see
My cousin Tybalt weltering in his blood,
Seeking for Romeo! Stay, Tybalt, stay!
Romeo, I come; this do I drink to thee." H.

[3] This idea was probably suggested to the Poet by his native place. The charnel at Stratford-upon-Avon is a very large one,

Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort;—
Alack, alack! is it not like, that I,
So early waking,—what with loathsome smells,
And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad;[4]—
O! if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environed with all these hideous fears,
And madly play with my forefathers' joints,
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
O, look! methinks, I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point.—Stay, Tybalt, stay!—
Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.[5]

[*She throws herself on the Bed.*

and perhaps contains a greater number of bones than are to be found in any other repository of the same kind in England.

[4] "The *mandrake*," says Thomas Newton in his Herbal, "has been idly represented as a creature having life, and engendered under the earth of the seed of some dead person that hath beene convicted and put to death for some felonie or murther, and that they had the same in such dampish and funerall places where the saide convicted persons were buried." So in Webster's Duchess of Malfy, 1623: "I have this night digg'd up a *mandrake*, and am grown *mad* with it." See 2 Henry VI., Act iii. sc. 2, note 14.

[5] Such is the closing line of this speech in the quarto of 1597. The other old copies give it thus: "Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, here's drink: I drink to thee;" where a stage-direction "[*Here drink.*]" has evidently got misprinted as a part of the text. The oldest reading is retained by all modern editors except Knight, Collier, and Verplanck.—Coleridge remarks upon the passage thus: "Shakespeare provides for the finest decencies. It would have been too bold a thing for a girl of fifteen;—but she swallows the draught in a fit of fright." Schlegel has the same thought: "Her imagination falls into an uproar,—so many terrors bewilder the tender brain of the maiden,—and she drinks off the cup in a

SCENE IV. Capulet's Hall.

Enter Lady Capulet *and the Nurse.*

Lady C. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, nurse.

Nurse. They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.[1] [*Exit.*

Enter Capulet.

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd,
The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock. —
Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica:
Spare not for cost.

Lady C. Go, go, you cot-quean, go;
Get you to bed: 'faith, you'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.[2]

Cap. No, not a whit: What! I have watch'd ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

Lady C. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt[3] in your time;
But I will watch you from such watching now.
[*Exit Lady* Capulet

tumult, to drain which with composure would have evinced a too masculine resolvedness." H

[1] The room where the pastry was made.

[2] The old copies assign this speech to the Nurse. It was transferred to Lady Capulet at the suggestion of Z. Jackson, who pertinently asks, — "Can we imagine that a nurse would take so great a liberty with her master, as to call him a cot-quean, and order him to bed?" Besides, the Nurse has just been sent forth by her mistress to "fetch more spices." — *Cot-quean* was a term for a man who busied himself overmuch in women's affairs: so used down to the time of Addison, as appears from the Spectator, No. 482. H.

[3] The animal called the *mouse-hunt* is the martin, which, being

Cap. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood! — Now fellow,
What's there?

Enter Servants, with Spits, Logs, and Baskets.

1 *Serv.* Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit* 1 *Serv.*] — Sirrah, fetch drier logs:
Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

2 *Serv.* I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*

Cap. 'Mass, and well said; a merry whoreson, ha.
Thou shalt be logger-head. — Good Father! 'tis day:
The county will be here with music straight,
[*Music within.*
For so he said he would. — I hear him near: —
Nurse! — Wife! — what, ho! — what, nurse, I say!

Re-enter the Nurse.

Go, waken Juliet; go, and trim her up.
I'll go and chat with Paris. — Hie, make haste,
Make haste! the bridegroom he is come already:
Make haste, I say! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

JULIET'S Chamber; JULIET on the Bed.

Enter the Nurse.

Nurse. Mistress! — what, mistress! — Juliet! — fast, I warrant her, she: —

of the weasel tribe, prowls about in the night for its prey. "Cat after kinde, good *mouse-hunt*," is one of Heywood's proverbs

Why, lamb! why, lady!—fie, you slug-a-bed!—
Why, love, I say!—madam! sweet-heart!—why, bride!
What! not a word?—you take your pennyworths now:
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
The county Paris hath set up his rest,[1]
That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me
(Marry and amen!) how sound is she asleep!
I needs must wake her.—Madam, madam, madam!
Ay, let the county take you in your bed:
He'll fright you up, i'faith.—Will it not be?
What, drest! and in your clothes! and down again
I must needs wake you. Lady! lady, lady!
Alas! alas!—Help! help! my lady's dead!—
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!—
Some *aqua-vitæ*, ho!—my lord! my lady!

Enter Lady CAPULET.

Lady C. What noise is here?
Nurse. O, lamentable day!
Lady C. What is the matter?
Nurse. Look, look! O, heavy day!
Lady C. O me! O me!—my child, my only life,
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—
Help, help!—call help.

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. For shame! bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.

[1] To *set up one's rest* was the same as to *make up one's mind* In The Merchant of Venice, Act ii. sc. 2, Launcelot has a similar quibble: "As I have *set up my rest* to run away, so I *will not rest* till I have run some ground." See, also, The Comedy of Errors, Act iv sc. 3, note 2. H.

Nurse. She's dead, deceas'd, she's dead; alack the day!

Lady C. Alack the day! she's dead, she's dead, she's dead.

Cap. Ha! let me see her. — Out, alas! she's cold;
Her blood is settled; and her joints are stiff;
Life and these lips have long been separated:
Death lies on her, like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.[2]

Nurse. O, lamentable day!

Lady C. O, woful time!

Cap. Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,
Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

Enter Friar LAURENCE *and* PARIS, *with Musicians.*

Fri. Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

Cap. Ready to go, but never to return. —
O son! the night before thy wedding-day
Hath death lain with thy wife: — there she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded! I will die,
And leave him all; life, living, all is death's.[3]

Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's face,[4]
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

[2] In the first quarto, this speech stands thus:

"Stay! let me see: all pale and wan.
Accursed time! unfortunate old man!" H.

[3] So in the old copies, but commonly changed in modern editions to, "life *leaving*, all is death's." H.

[4] The quarto of 1597 continues the speech of Paris thus:

"And doth it now present such prodigies?
Accurst, unhappy, miserable man,
Forlorn, forsaken, destitute I am;

Lady C. Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
Most miserable hour, that e'er time saw
In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight.

Nurse. O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!
Most lamentable day! most woeful day,
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this:
O woeful day, O woeful day!

Par. Beguil'd, divorced, wronged, spited, slain
Most detestable death, by thee beguil'd,
By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown!—
O love! O life!—not life, but love in death!

Cap. Despis'd, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!
Uncomfortable time! why cam'st thou now
To murder, murder our solemnity?—
O child! O child!—my soul, and not my child!—
Dead art thou!—alack! my child is dead;
And with my child my joys are buried!

Fri. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives not
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now Heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But Heaven keeps His part in eternal life.
The most you sought was her promotion;

Born to the world to be a slave in it:
Distrest. remediless, and unfortunate.
Oh heavens! Oh nature! wherefore did you make me
To live so vile, so wretched as I shall?"

For 'twas your heaven she should be advanc'd:
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O! in this love you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
She's not well married that lives married long,
But she's best married that dies married young.
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
In all her best array bear her to church;
For though fond nature bids us all lament,[5]
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things, that we ordained festival,
Turn from their office to black funeral:
Our instruments, to melancholy bells;
Our wedding cheer, to a sad burial feast,
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
And all things change them to the contrary.

Fri. Sir, go you in, — and, madam, go with him; —
And go, sir Paris: — every one prepare
To follow this fair corse unto her grave.
The heavens do lower upon you, for some ill;
Move them no more, by crossing their high will.

[*Exeunt* CAP., *Lady* CAP., PARIS, *and Friar.*

1 *Mus.* 'Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

Nurse. Honest good fellows, ah! put up, put up; For, well you know, this is a pitiful case. [*Exit.*

1 *Mus.* Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

[5] All the old copies except the folio of 1632 have *some* instead of *fond*. — *In all*, of the preceding line, is from the first quarto; the later copies having *And in*. H

Enter PETER.[6]

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians! "Heart's Ease, Heart's Ease;" O! an you will have me live, play "Heart's Ease."

1 *Mus.* Why "Heart's Ease?"

Pet. O, musicians! because my heart itself plays "My heart is full of woe."[7] O! play me some merry dump, to comfort me.

2 *Mus.* Not a dump we: 'tis no time to play now.

Pet. You will not, then?

2 *Mus.* No.

Pet. I will, then, give it you soundly.

1 *Mus.* What will you give us?

Pet. No money, on my faith; but the gleek: I will give you the minstrel.[8]

1 *Mus.* Then will I give you the serving-creature.

[6] Such is the stage-direction of the undated quarto and the folio of 1623. The quartos of 1599 and 1609 have, "Enter Will Kemp;" which shows that Kemp was the original performer of Peter's part. It seems not unlikely that this part of the scene was written on purpose for Kemp to display his talents in, as there could hardly be any other reason for such a piece of buffoonery. Coleridge has the following upon it: "As the audience know that Juliet is not dead, this scene is, perhaps, excusable. But it is a strong warning to minor dramatists not to introduce at one time many separate characters agitated by one and the same circumstance. It is difficult to understand what effect, whether that of pity or of laughter, Shakespeare meant to produce;— the occasion and the characteristic speeches are so little in harmony! For example, what the Nurse says is excellently suited to the Nurse's character, but grotesquely unsuited to the occasion." H.

[7] This is the burthen of the first stanza of A Pleasant New Ballad of Two Lovers: "Hey hoe! my heart is full of woe."— A *dump* was formerly the term for a grave or melancholy strain in music, vocal or instrumental. It also signified a kind of poetical elegy. A *merry dump* is no doubt a purposed absurdity put into the mouth of Master Peter.

[8] A pun is here intended. A *gleekman*, or *gligman*, is a *minstrel*. *To give the gleek* meant also to pass a jest upon a person, to make him appear ridiculous; a *gleek* being a *jest* or *scoff*.

Pet. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you: Do you note me?

1 *Mus.* An you *re* us, and *fa* us, you note us.

2 *Mus.* 'Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

Pet. Then have at you with my wit: I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger. — Answer me like men:

> When griping grief the heart doth wound,
> And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
> Then music, with her silver sound,[9] —

Why, "silver sound?" why, "music, with her silver sound?" What say you, Simon Catling?[10]

1 *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty![11] What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

2 *Mus.* I say — "silver sound," because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too! — What say you, James Soundpost?

3 *Mus* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy! you are the singer:

This is part of a song by Richard Edwards, to be found in the Paradice of Dainty Devices. Another copy of this song is to be found in Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. — The second line of Peter's quotation is wanting in all the old copies except the first quarto; and in all the old copies the words, "Then have at you with my wit," are made a part of the preceding speech. H.

[10] This worthy takes his name from a small lutestring made of catgut; his companion the fiddler, from an instrument of the same name mentioned by many of our old writers, and recorded by Milton as an instrument of mirth:

> "When the merry bells ring round,
> And the joyful *rebecks* sound."

[1] So the first quarto; the other old copies, *Prates*, or *Pratest*

I will say for you. It is — "music, with her silver sound," because such fellows as you have seldom gold for sounding:

Then music, with her silver sound,
With speedy help doth lend redress.

[*Exit, singing*

1 *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this same!

2 *Mus.* Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt*

ACT V.

SCENE I. Mantua. A Street.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne;
And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.[2]
I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead,
(Strange dream! that gives a dead man leave to think,)
And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips,

[1] Thus the first quarto. The later copies read, "If I may trust the flattering *truth* of sleep." The sense appears to be, If I may trust the visions with which my eye flattered me in sleep.

[2] These three last lines are very gay and pleasing. But why does Shakespeare give Romeo this involuntary cheerfulness just before the extremity of unhappiness? Perhaps to show the vanity of trusting to those uncertain and casual exaltations or depressions, which many consider as certain foretokens of good and evil — JOHNSON.

That I reviv'd, and was an emperor.
Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!—

Enter BALTHASAR.

News from Verona! — How now, Balthasar!
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet?[3] That I ask again;
For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill:
Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,
And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
And presently took post to tell it you:
O! pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

Rom. Is it e'en so? then I defy you, stars! —
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

Bal. I do beseech you, sir, have patience:[4]
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

Rom. Tush! thou art deceiv'd;
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

Bal. No, my good lord.

Rom. No matter; get thee gone,
And hire those horses: I'll be with thee straight. —
[*Exit* BALTHASAR.

[3] So the first quarto; the later copies, "How doth my lady Juliet?" thus repeating a part of the foregoing line. H.

[4] So all the old editions except the first, which reads, — "Pardon me, sir, I will not leave you thus." — *Defy*, in the first line of the preceding speech, is from the earliest copy; the others having *deny*. H

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night
Let's see for means: — O, mischief! thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary, —
And hereabouts he dwells, — whom late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples: meagre were his looks;
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd,[5] and other skins
Of ill-shap'd fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said, —
An if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.
O! this same thought did but forerun my need;
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house:
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut. —
What, ho! apothecary!

Enter the Apothecary.

Ap. Who calls so loud?

Rom. Come hither, man. — I see that thou art poor;
Hold, there is forty ducats: let me have

[5] We learn from Nashe's Have with You to Saffron Walden, 1596, that a stuffed alligator then made part of the furniture of an apothecary's shop: "He made an anatomie of a rat, and after hanged her over his head, instead of an *apothecary's crocodile* or *dried alligator*."

A dram of poison; such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins,
That the life-weary taker may fall dead;
And that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath
As violently, as hasty powder fir'd
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Ap. Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare, and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,[6]
Contempt and beggary hang upon thy back,
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law.
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then, be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Ap. My poverty, but not my will, consents.

Rom. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Ap. Put this in any liquid thing you will,
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would despatch you straight.

Rom. There is thy gold; worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell.
I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.
Farewell; buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—

[6] Thus the old copies. Otway copied the line in his Caius Marius, only changing *starveth* to *stareth*, which has been adopted into the text by Singer, and may be right. Pope changed "*starveth in* thy eyes" to "*stare within* thy eyes." As it stands, the expression conveys a strong sense, though it will hardly bear analysing. The two nouns with a verb in the singular was not ungrammatical according to old usage. — In the next line, the first quarto has, "Upon thy back hangs ragged misery," which is strangely preferred by some editors. H.

Come, cordial, and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II. Friar LAURENCE's Cell.

Enter Friar JOHN.

John. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter Friar LAURENCE

Lau. This same should be the voice of friar John. —
Welcome from Mantua: What says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

John. Going to find a barefoot brother out,
One of our order, to associate me,[1]
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

[1] Each friar had always a companion assigned him by the superior, when he asked leave to go out. In the Visitatio Notabilis de Seleborne, a curious record printed in White's Natural History of Selborne, Wykeham enjoins the canons not to go abroad without leave from the prior, who is ordered on such occasions to assign the brother a companion, "ne suspicio sinistra vel scandalum oriatur." There is a similar regulation in the statutes of Trinity College, Cambridge. So in the poem:

> "Apace our frier John to Mantua him hyes,
> And, for because in Italy it is a wonted gyse
> That friers in the towne should seldome walke alone,
> But of theyr covent ay *should be accompanide with one*
> *Of his profession*, straight a house he fyndeth out,
> In mynde to take some frier to walke the town about."

Shakespeare has departed from the poem, in supposing the pestilence to rage at Verona instead of Mantua.

Lau. Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

John. I could not send it, — here it is again, —
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

Lau. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice,[2] but full of charge,
Of dear import; and the neglecting it
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [*Exit.*

Lau. Now must I to the monument alone.
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake;
She will beshrew me much, that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents;
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come:
Poor living corse, clos'd in a dead man's tomb!
[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Church-Yard: in it a Monument belonging to the Capulets.

Enter PARIS, *and his Page, bearing Flowers and a Torch.*

Par. Give me thy torch, boy: hence, and stand aloof; —
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
Under yond' yew-trees lay thee all along,[1]

[2] That is, was not on a *trivial* or *idle* matter, but on a subject of importance. See Act iii sc. 1, note 9.

[1] All the old copies except the first quarto have "*young* trees" instead of "*yew*-trees." H.

Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;
So shall no foot upon the church-yard tread,
(Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,)
But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee; go.

Page. I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the church-yard; yet I will adventure.

[*Retires.*

Par. Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew.
O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones,
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew;
Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans:
The obsequies, that I for thee will keep,
Nightly shall be, to strew thy grave and weep.[2]

[*The Boy whistles.*

The boy gives warning, something doth approach.
What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
To cross my obsequies, and true-love's rite?
What! with a torch?—muffle me, night, awhile.

[*Retires.*

Enter ROMEO *and* BALTHASAR, *with a Torch, Mattock, &c.*

Rom. Give me that mattock, and the wrenching iron.

[2] Instead of these six lines, the quarto of 1597 has the following seven, which are preferred by some editors:

"Sweet flower, with flowers I strew thy bridal bed:
Sweet tomb, that in thy circuit dost contain
The perfect model of eternity,
Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain,
Accept this latest favour at my hands,
That living honour'd thee, and, being dead,
With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb." M.

Hold, take this letter: early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
Give me the light: Upon thy life I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death,
Is, partly, to behold my lady's face;
But, chiefly, to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring, a ring that I must use
In dear employment. Therefore hence, begone:
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
In what I further shall intend to do,
By Heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
And strew this hungry church-yard with thy limbs.
The time and my intents are savage-wild;
More fierce, and more inexorable far,
Than empty tigers, or the roaring sea.

Bal. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Rom. So shalt thou show me friendship. — Take thou that:
Live, and be prosperous; and farewell, good fellow.

Bal. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout:
His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*Retires*

Rom. Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
[*Breaking open the Door of the Monument.*
And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food!

Par. This is that banish'd haughty Montague,
That murder'd my love's cousin; — with which grief,
It is supposed, the fair creature died; —
And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him. —
[*Advancing*
Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague:

Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.
Rom. I must, indeed; and therefore came I hither.—
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;
Fly hence and leave me:—think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee.—I beseech thee, youth,
Heap not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury:—O, begone!
By Heaven, I love thee better than myself;
For I come hither arm'd against myself:
Stay not, begone;—live, and hereafter say,
A madman's mercy bade thee run away.
Par. I do defy thy conjurations,[3]
And apprehend thee for a felon here.
Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then, have at thee, boy. [*They fight.*
Page. O Lord! they fight: I will go call the watch. [*Exit Page.*
Par. O, I am slain! [*Falls.*]—If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet. [*Dies.*
Rom. In faith, I will.—Let me peruse this face:—
Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris.—
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think
He told me, Paris should have married Juliet:

[3] So the quarto of 1597: that of 1599 has *commiration;* the later copies, *commiseration. Conjurations* are *earnest requests* or *entreaties:* the verb *conjure* is still much used in the same sense. Mr. Collier, however, retains the later reading, alleging that "the sense of *commiseration* is clear; not so of *conjurations.*" What can the man mean? *Conjurations* is just the word wanted for the place. H.

Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so?—O! give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave,—
A grave? O, no! a lantern, slaughter'd youth:[4]
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence full of light.
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.—
[*Laying* PARIS *in the Monument.*
How oft, when men are at the point of death,
Have they been merry? which their keepers call
A lightning before death:[5] O! how may I
Call this a lightning?—O, my love! my wife!
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:[6]

[4] A *lantern* does not here signify an enclosure for a lighted candle, but a *louvre*, or what in ancient records is styled *lanternium*; that is, a spacious round or octagonal turret full of windows, by means of which cathedrals and sometimes halls are illuminated, such as the beautiful *lantern* at Ely Minster. The same word, with the same sense, occurs in Churchyard's Siege of Edinborough Castle: "This lofty seat and *lantern* of that land like lodestarre stode, and lokte o'er ev'ry streete." And in Holland's translation of Pliny: "Hence came the louvers and *lanternes* reared over the roofes of temples." A *presence* is a public room, which is at times the *presence-chamber* of a sovereign.

[5] This idea frequently occurs in old dramas. So in The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, 1601:

"I thought it was *a lightning before death*,
Too sudden to be certain."

[6] So in Sidney's Arcadia: "Death being able to divide the soule, but not the beauty, from her body."—This speech yields another apt instance of the care and skill with which the "corrected, augmented, and amended" copy of this play was elaborated. The quarto of 1597 gives merely the following:

"Ah, dear Juliet!
How well thy beauty doth become this grave!
O! I believe that unsubstantial death
Is amorous, and doth court my love:

Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O! what more favour can I do to thee,
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain,
To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin!—Ah, dear Juliet!
Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous;[7]
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that, I will still stay with thee,

Therefore will I, O here, O ever here!
Set up my everlasting rest,
With worms, that are thy chamber-maids.
Come, desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary barge:
Here's to my love.—O, true apothecary!
Thy drugs are swift: thus with a kiss I die." H.

[7] The old copies, except the first quarto, read thus: "I will believe, shall I believe that unsubstantial death is amorous." Where "I will believe" is obviously but another reading for "shall I believe." Collier, however, retains both!—A connection is traceable between parts of this speech and some lines in Daniel's Complaint of Rosamond, published in 1592. In the first five lines the ghost of Rosamond is speaking of her death, and in the others is reporting what her royal lover spoke when he came and found her dead:

"But now, the poison, spread through all my veins,
'Gan dispossess my living senses quite;
And nought-respecting death, the last of pains,
Plac'd his pale colours, th' ensign of his might,
Upon his new-got spoil before his right."

"Ah! now, methinks, I see, *death, dallying, seeks*
To entertain itself in love's sweet place:
Decayed roses of discolour'd cheeks
Do yet retain dear notes of former grace,
And ugly death sits fair within her face;
Sweet remnants resting of vermilion red,
That death itself doubts whether she be dead." H

And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again :[8] here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids ; O! here
Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh. — Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! and lips, O, you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death! —
Come, bitter conduct,[9] come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
Here's to my love! [*Drinks.*] — O, true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick. — Thus with a kiss I die.
[*Dies*

Enter, at the other end of the Church-yard, Friar LAURENCE, *with a Lantern, Crow, and Spade.*

Fri. St. Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves![10] — Who's there?

[8] All the old copies except the first quarto have a remarkable corruption here which is not easy to be accounted for. Whether the matter were a various reading by the Poet, or an interpolation by the players, is uncertain ; but the confusion it makes shows that it could not have been meant by Shakespeare as a part of the text. It may also be cited as proving that the folio must have been printed from one of the quarto copies. After the words, "Depart again," are added the following lines :

"Come, lie thou in my arms.
Here's to thy health, where'er thou tumblest in.
O, true apothecary! thy drugs are quick.
Thus with a kiss I die. Depart again." H.

[9] *Conduct* for *conductor*. So in a former scene : "And fire-eyed fury be my *conduct* now."

[10] This accident was reckoned ominous. So in King Richard III., Hastings, going to execution, says, — "Three times to-day

Bal. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

Fri. Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond' that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Bal. It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,
One that you love.

Fri. Who is it?

Bal. Romeo.

Fri. How long hath he been there?

Bal. Full half an hour.

Fri. Go with me to the vault.

Bal. I dare not, sir:
My master knows not but I am gone hence,
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.

Fri. Stay, then, I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me;
O! much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.[11]

Bal. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.[12]

my foot-cloth horse did *scumble*." — After this line, some editors have added another from the first quarto, thus: "Who is it that consorts so late the dead?" H.

[11] So the quarto of 1599; that of 1609 and the folio have "*unlucky* thing." H.

[12] This is one of the touches of nature that would have escaped the hand of any painter less attentive to it than Shakespeare. What happens to a person while he is under the manifest influence of fear, will seem to him, when he is recovered from it, like a dream. Homer represents Rhesus dying, fast asleep, and, as it were, beholding his enemy in a dream, plunging a sword into his bosom. Eustathius and Dacier both applaud this image as very natural; for a man in such a condition, says Mr. Pope, awakes no further than to see confusedly what environs him, and to think it not a reality, but a vision. — STEEVENS.

Fri. [*Advancing.*] Romeo!
Alack, alack! what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?—
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?—
[*Entering the Monument.*
Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? what! Paris too?
And steep'd in blood?—Ah! what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!—
The lady stirs. [JULIET *wakes.*

Jul. O, comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am.—Where is my Romeo?
[*Noise within.*

Fri. I hear some noise.—Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep.
A greater Power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents; come, come away.
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too: come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming,
Come, go, good Juliet,—[*Noise again.*] I dare no longer stay. [*Exit.*

Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—
What's here? a cup, clos'd in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.—
O churl! drink all, and leave no friendly drop,
To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;
Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*
Thy lips are warm![13]

[13] Shakespeare has been arraigned for making Romeo die be

1 *Watch.* [*Within.*] Lead, boy:— Which way?
Jul. Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief. — O, happy dagger! [*Snatching* ROMEO's *Dagger.*
This is thy sheath; [*Stabs herself.*] there rest, and let me die.[14] [*Falls on* ROMEO, *and dies*

Enter Watch, with the Page of PARIS.

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.
1 *Watch.* The ground is bloody: Search about the church-yard.
Go, some of you, whoe'er you find, attach.—
[*Exeunt some.*

fore Juliet awakes from her trance, and thus losing a happy opportunity of introducing an affecting scene between these unfortunate lovers. Schlegel remarks, that "the Poet seems to have hit upon what was best. There is a measure of agitation, beyond which all that is superadded becomes torture, or glides off ineffectually from the already-saturated mind. In case of the cruel reunion of the lovers for an instant, Romeo's remorse for his overhasty self-murder, Juliet's despair over her deceitful hope, at first cherished, then annihilated, that she was at the goal of her wishes, must have deviated into caricatures. Nobody surely doubts that Shakespeare was able to represent these with suitable force; but here every thing soothing was welcome, in order that we may not be frightened out of the melancholy, to which we willingly resign ourselves, by too painful discords. Why should we heap still more upon accident, that is already so guilty? Wherefore shall not the tortured Romeo quietly

'Shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From his world-wearied flesh?'

He holds his beloved in his arms, and, dying, cheers himself with a vision of everlasting marriage. She also seeks death, in a kiss, upon his lips. These last moments must belong unparticipated to tenderness, that we may hold fast to the thought, that love lives, although the lovers perish."

[14] All the old copies except the first quarto have *rust* instead of *rest*. Mr. Dyce surely is right in saying that, "at such a moment, the thoughts of Juliet were not likely to wander away to the *future rusting* of the dagger; she only wishes it, by *resting* in her bosom as in its sheath, to give her instant death." H.

Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain;
And Juliet bleeding; warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain these two days buried.—
Go, tell the prince,—run to the Capulets,—
Raise up the Montagues,—some others search:—
[*Exeunt other Watchmen.*
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance descry.

Enter some of the Watch, with BALTHASAR

2 *Watch.* Here's Romeo's man; we found him in the church-yard.

1 *Watch.* Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

Enter another Watchman, with Friar LAURENCE.

3 *Watch.* Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps:
We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this church-yard side.

1 *Watch.* A great suspicion: stay the friar too.

Enter the Prince and Attendants.

Prince. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

Enter CAPULET, *Lady* CAPULET, *and Others.*

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

Lady C. The people in the street cry—Romeo,
Some—Juliet, and some—Paris; and all run
With open outcry toward our monument.

Prince. What fear is this, which startles in our ears?[15]

1 *Watch.* Sovereign, here lies the county Paris slain;

And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new-kill'd.

Prince. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

1 *Watch.* Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man,
With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

Cap. O, Heaven!—O, wife! look how our daughter bleeds!

This dagger hath mista'en,—for lo! his house
Is empty on the back of Montague,—
And is mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.[16]

Lady C. O me! this sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter MONTAGUE *and Others.*

Prince. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.

Mon. Alas, my liege! my wife is dead to-night;[17]

[15] The old copies have *your* instead of *our*. Johnson made the change, which, though perhaps not necessary to the sense helps it a good deal. H.

[16] The words "for lo! his house is empty on the back of Montague," are parenthetical. It appears that the *dagger* was anciently worn *behind the back*. So in Humor's Ordinarie: "See you yon huge bum *dagger at his back?*" And in The Longer Thou Livest the More Fool Thou Art, 1570:

> "Thou must wear thy sword by thy side,
> And thy *dagger* handsumly *at thy backe.*"

[17] After this line the quarto of 1597 adds: "And young Benvolio is deceased too."

Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:
What further woe conspires against mine age?

Prince. Look, and thou shalt see.

Mon. O, thou untaught! what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

Prince. Seal up the mouth of outcry for a while,[18]
'Till we can clear these ambiguities,
And know their spring, their head, their true descent;
And then will I be general of your woes,
And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

Fri. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
Myself condemned, and myself excus'd.

Prince. Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

Fri. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:
I married them; and their stolen marriage-day
Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death
Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city;
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pin'd.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betroth'd, and would have married her perforce,
To county Paris: then comes she to me,

[18] The old copies have *outrage* instead of *outcry*. It is not easy to see what business *outrage* can have in such a place The change is taken from Mr. Collier's second folio It is supported by the preceding passage,—"All run with open outcry toward our monument." H.

And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
A sleeping potion; which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death: meantime I writ to Romeo,
That he should hither come, as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, friar John,
Was stay'd by accident; and yesternight
Return'd my letter back. Then, all alone,
At the prefixed hour of her waking,
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault:
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo.
But, when I came, (some minute ere the time
Of her awakening,) here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.
She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of Heaven with patience:
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb;
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.
All this I know; and to the marriage
Her nurse is privy; and, if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrific'd, some hour before his time,
Unto the rigour of severest law.

Prince. We still have known thee for a holy man. —
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

Bal. I brought my master news of Juliet's death;

And then in post he came from Mantua,
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early bid me give his father;
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not, and left him there.

Prince. Give me the letter, I will look on it.—
Where is the county's page, that rais'd the watch?
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

Page. He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave,
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
Anon, comes one with light to ope the tomb,
And, by and by, my master drew on him;
And then I ran away to call the watch.

Prince. This letter doth make good the friar's words,
Their course of love, the tidings of her death;
And here he writes, that he did buy a poison
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.—
Where be these enemies?—Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That Heaven find means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords, too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen:[19]—all are punish'd.

Cap. O, brother Montague! give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure; for no more
Can I demand.

Mon. But I can give thee more;
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That, while Verona by that name is known,

[19] Mercutio and Paris. Mercutio is expressly called the Prince's kinsman in Act iii. sc. 4; and that Paris was also the Prince's kinsman, may be inferred from what Romeo says: "Let me peruse this face; *Mercutio's kinsman,* noble county Paris."

There shall no figure at such rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

Prince. A glooming peace this morning with it brings;[20]
The sun for sorrow will not show his head.
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished:[21]
For never was a story of more woe,
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo. [*Exeunt.*

[20] The quarto of 1597 reads, "A *gloomy* peace." To *gloom* is an ancient verb, used by Spenser and other old writers.

[21] This line has reference to the poem from which the fable is taken; in which the Nurse is banished for concealing the marriage; Romeo's servant set at liberty, because he had only acted in obedience to his master's orders; the Apothecary is hanged; while Friar Laurence was permitted to retire to a hermitage near Verona, where he ended his life in penitence and tranquillity.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET.

THE story on which Shakespeare founded THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK, was told by Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian, whose work was first printed in 1514, though written as early as 1204. The incidents as related by him were borrowed by Belleforest, and set forth in his *Histoires Tragiques*. 1564. It was probably through the French version of Belleforest that the tale first found its way to the English stage. The only English translation that has come down to us was printed in 1608; and of this only a single copy is known to have survived. The edition of 1608 was most likely a reprint; but, if so, we have no means of ascertaining when it was first printed: Mr. Collier thinks there can be no doubt that it originally came from the press considerably before 1600. The only known copy is preserved among Capell's books in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and has been lately republished by Collier in his Shakespeare's Library. It is entitled "The History of Hamblet."

As there told, the story is, both in matter and style, uncouth and barbarous in the last degree; a savage, shocking tale of lust and murder, unredeemed by a single touch of art or fancy in the narrator. Perhaps there is nothing of the Poet's achieving more wonderful than that he should have reared so superb a dramatic structure out of materials so scanty and so revolting. The scene of the incidents is laid before the introduction of Christianity into Denmark, and when the Danish power held sway in England: further than this, the time is not specified. So much of the story as was made use of for the drama is soon told.

Roderick, king of Denmark, divided his kingdom into provinces, and placed governors in them. Among these were two valiant and warlike brothers, Horvendile and Fengon. The greatest honour that men of noble birth could at that time win, was by exercising the art of piracy on the seas; wherein Horvendile surpassed all others. Collere, king of Norway, was so wrought upon

by his fame, that he challenged him to fight body to body; and the challenge was accepted on condition that the vanquished should lose all the riches he had in his ship, and the vanquisher should cause his body to be honourably buried. Collere was slain; and Horvendile, after making great havoc in Norway, returned home with a mass of treasure, most of which he sent to King Roderick, who thereupon gave him his daughter Geruth in marriage. Of this marriage proceeded Hamblet, the hero of the tale.

All this so provoked the envy of Fengon, that he determined to kill his brother. So, having secretly assembled certain men, when Horvendile was at a banquet with his friends, he suddenly set upon him and slew him; but managed his treachery with so much cunning that no man suspected him. Before doing this, he had corrupted his brother's wife, and was afterwards married to her. Young Hamblet, thinking that he was likely to fare no better than his father had done, went to feigning himself mad, and made as if he had utterly lost his wits; wherein he used such craft that he became an object of ridicule to the satellites of the court. Many of his actions, however, were so shrewd, and his answers were often so fit, that men of a deeper reach began to suspect somewhat, thinking that beneath his folly there lay hid a sharp and pregnant spirit. So they counselled the king to try measures for discovering his meaning. The plan hit upon for entrapping him was, to leave him with some beautiful woman in a secret place, where she could use her art upon him. To this end they led him out into the woods, and arranged that the woman should there meet with him. One of the men, however, who was a friend of the Prince, warned him, by certain signs, of the danger that was threatening him: so he escaped that treachery.

Among the king's friends there was one who more than all the rest suspected Hamblet's madness to be feigned; and he counselled the king to use some more subtle and crafty means for discovering his purpose. His device was, that the king should make as though he were going out on a long hunting excursion; and that, meanwhile, Hamblet should be shut up alone in a chamber with his mother, some one being hidden behind the hangings to hear their speeches. It was thought that, if there were any craft in the Prince, he would easily discover it to his mother, not fearing that she would make known his secret intent. So, the plot being duly arranged, the counsellor went into the chamber secretly and hid himself behind the arras, not long before the queen and Hamblet came thither. But the Prince, suspecting some treacherous practice, kept up his counterfeit of madness, and went to beating with his arms, as cocks use to strike with their wings, upon the hangings: feeling something stir under them, he cried, "A rat, a rat!" and thrust his sword into them; which done, he pulled the counsellor out half dead, and made an end of him.

Hamblet then has a long interview with his mother, who weeps

and torments herself, being sore grieved to see her only child made a mere mockery. He lays before her the wickedness of her life and the crimes of her husband, and also lets her into the secret of his madness being feigned. "Behold," says he, "into what distress I am fallen, and to what mischief your over-great lightness and want of wisdom have induced me, that I am constrained to play the madman to save my life, instead of practising arms, following adventures, and seeking to make myself known as the true heir of the valiant and virtuous Horvendile. The gestures of a fool are fit for me, to the end that, guiding myself wisely therein, I may preserve my life for the Danes, and the memory of my deceased father; for the desire of revenging his death is so engraven in my heart, that, if I die not shortly, I hope to take so great vengeance that these countries shall forever speak thereof. Nevertheless, I must stay my time and occasion, lest by making over-great haste I be the cause of mine own ruin and overthrow. To conclude, weep not, madam, to see my folly, but rather sigh and lament your own offence; for we are not to sorrow and grieve at other men's vices, but for our own misdeeds and great follies."

The interview ends in an agreement of mutual confidence between Hamblet and his mother; all her anger at his sharp reproofs being forgotten in the joy she conceives, to behold the gallant spirit of her son, and to think what she might hope from his policy and wisdom. She promises to keep his secret faithfully, and to aid him all she can in his purpose of revenge; swearing to him that she had often hindered the shortening of his life, and that she had never consented to the murder of his father.

Fengon's next device was, to send Hamblet into England, with secret letters to have him there put to death. Hamblet, again suspecting mischief, comes to some speech with his mother, and desires her not to make any show of grief at his departure, but rather to counterfeit gladness at being rid of his presence. He also counsels her to celebrate his funeral at the end of a year, and assures her that she shall then see him return from his voyage. Two of Fengon's ministers being sent along with him with secret letters to the king of England, when they were at sea, the Prince, his companions being asleep, read their commission, and substituted for it one requiring the messengers to be hung. After this was done, he returned to Denmark, and arrived the very day when the Danes were celebrating his funeral, supposing him to be dead. Fengon and his courtiers were then at their banquet, and Hamblet's arrival provoked them the more to drink and carouse; wherein Hamblet encouraged them, himself acting as butler, and keeping them supplied with liquor, until they were all laid drunk on the floor. When they were all fast asleep, he caused the hangings of the room to fall down and cover them; then, having nailed the edges fast to the floor so that none could escape, he set fire to the hall, and all were burnt to death. Fengon having previously

withdrawn to his chamber, Hamblet then went to him, and, after telling him what he had done, cut off his head with a sword.

The next day, Hamblet makes an oration to the Danes, laying open to them his uncle's treachery, and what himself has done in revenge of his father's death; whereupon he is unanimously elected king. After his coronation, he goes to Eugland again. Finding that the king of England has a plot for putting him to death, he manages to kill him, and returns to Denmark with two wives. He is afterwards assailed by his uncle Wiglerus, and finally betrayed to death by one of his English wives named Hermetrude, who then marries Wiglerus.

There is, besides, an episodical passage in the tale, from which the Poet probably took some hints towards the part of his hero, especially his melancholy mood, and his suspicion that "the spirit he has seen may be a devil:" "In those days, the north parts of the world, living then under Satan's laws, were full of enchanters, so that there was not any young gentleman that knew not something therein sufficient to serve his turn, if need required; and so Hamblet, while his father lived, had been instructed in that devlish art, whereby the wicked spirit abuseth mankind, and advertiseth them, as he can, of things past. It toucheth not the matter herein to discover the parts of divination in man, and whether this Prince, by reason of his over-great melancholy, had received those impressions, divining that which never any had before declared; like such as are saturnists by complexion, who oftentimes speak of things which, their fury ceasing, they can hardly understand." It is hardly needful to add, that Shakespeare makes his persons Christians, giving them the sentiments and manners of a much later period than they have in the tale; though he still places the scene at a time when England paid some sort of homage to the Danish crown, which was before the Norman conquest.

The earliest edition of the tragedy, in its finished state, was a quarto pamphlet of fifty-one leaves, the title-page reading thus: "The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy. At London: Printed by J. R. for N. L., and are to be sold at his shop under St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet-street. 1604." The same text was reissued in the same form in 1605, and again in 1611; besides an undated edition, which is commonly referred to 1607, as it was entered at the Stationers' in the fall of that year. In the folio of 1623, it stands the eighth of the tragedies, and is without any marking of the Acts and scenes save in the first two Acts. The folio also omits several passages that are among the best in the play, and some of them highly important to the right understanding of the hero's character. All these are duly attended to in our notes, so that they need not be specified here. On the other hand, the folio has a few short passages, and here and

there a line or two, that are not in the quartos. These also, are duly noted as they occur. On the whole, the quartos give the play considerably longer than the folio; the latter having been most likely printed from a play-house copy, which had been shortened, in some cases not very judiciously, for the greater convenience of representation.

From the words, "enlarged to almost as much again as it was," in the title-page of 1604, it was for a long time conjectured that the play had been printed before At length, in 1825, a single copy of an earlier edition was discovered, and the text accurately reprinted, with the following title-page: "The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: By William Shakespeare. As it hath been divers times acted by his Highness Servants, in the city of London; as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere. At London: Printed for N. L. and John Trundell. 1603." There is no doubt that this edition was piratical: it gives the play but about half as long as the later quartos; and carries in its face abundant evidence of having been greatly marred and disfigured in the making-up.

As to the methods used in getting up the edition of 1603, a careful examination of the text has satisfied us that they were much the same as appear to have been made use of in the quarto issues of King Henry V., and The Merry Wives of Windsor; of which some account is given in our Introductions to those plays. From divers minute particulars which cannot be specified without overmuch of detail, it seems very evident that the printing was done, for the most part, from rude reports taken at the theatre during representation, with, perhaps, some subsequent eking out and patching up from memory. There are indeed a few passages that seem to be given with much purity and completeness; they have an integrity of sense and language, that argues a faithful transcript; as, for instance, the speech of Voltimand in Act ii. sc. 2, which scarcely differs at all from the speech as we have it: but there is barely enough of this to serve as an exception to the rule. As to the other parts, the garbled and dislocated state of the text, where we often have the first of a sentence without the last, or the last without the first, or the first and last without the middle; the constant lameness of the verse where verse was meant, and the bungling attempts to print prose so as to look like verse; — all this proves beyond question, that the quarto of 1603 was by no means a faithful transcript of the play as it then stood; and the imperfectness is of just that kind and degree which would naturally adhere to the work of a slovenly or incompetent reporter.

On the other hand, it is equally clear, that at the time that copy was taken the play must have been very different from what it afterwards became. Polonius is there called Corambis, and his servant, Montano. Divers scenes and passages, some of them such as a reporter would have been least likely to omit, are there

wanting altogether. The Queen is there represented as concerting and actively co-operating with Hamlet against the King's life; and she has an interview of considerable length with Horatio, who informs her of Hamlet's escape from the ship bound for England, and of his safe arrival in Denmark; of which scene the later issues have no traces whatsoever. All this fully ascertains that the play must have undergone a thorough revisal after the making up of the copy from which the first quarto was printed. But, what is not a little remarkable, some of the passages met with in the folio, but not in the enlarged quartos, are found in the quarto of 1603; which shows that they were omitted in the later quartos, and not added afterwards.

With such aid so many copies before us, it may well be asked where the true text of Hamlet is to be found. The quarto of 1603, though furnishing valuable aid in divers cases, is not of any real authority: this is clear enough from what has already been said about it. On the other hand, it can hardly be questioned that the issue of 1604 was as authentic and as well authorised, as any that were made of Shakespeare's plays while he was living. We therefore take this as our main standard of the text, retaining, however, all the additional passages found in the folio of 1623. Moreover, the folio has many important changes and corrections which no reasonable editor would make any question of adopting. Mr. Knight indeed, who, after the true style of Knight-errantry, everywhere gives himself up to an almost unreserved championship of the folio, takes that as the supreme authority. But in this case, as usual, his zeal betrays him into something of unfairness: for wherever he prefers a folio reading, (and some of his preferences are odd enough,) he carefully notes it; but in divers cases, where the quarto readings are so clearly preferable that he dare not reject them, we have caught him adopting them without making any note of them. Taking the quarto of 1604 as our standard, whenever we adopt any variation of much importance from this, it will be found specified in our notes. And in many other cases, where the folio readings can plead any fair title to preference, we give them in the margin, though not ourselves preferring them; so that the reader can exercise his own choice in the matter.

The next question to be considered is, at what time was the tragedy of Hamlet originally written? On this point we find it extremely difficult to form a clear judgment. Thus much, however, is quite certain, that either this play was one of the Poet's very earliest productions, or else there was another play on the same subject. This certainty rests on a passage in an Epistle by Thomas Nash, prefixed to Greene's Arcadia: "It is a common practice now-a-days, among a sort of shifting companions that run through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint* whereto they were born, and busy themselves with the

endeavours of art, that could scarcely latinise their neck-verse, if they should have need; yet English *Seneca*, read by candle-light, yields many good sentences, as 'Blood is a beggar,' and so forth; and, if you entreat him fair in a frosty morning, he will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say handfuls, of tragical speeches." The words, "trade of *Noverint*," show that this squib was pointed at some writer of *Hamlet*, who had been known as an apprentice in the law; and Shakespeare's remarkable fondness for legal terms and allusions naturally suggests him as the person referred to. On the other hand, Nash's Epistle was written certainly as early as 1589, probably two years earlier, though this has been disputed. In 1589 Shakespeare was in his twenty-sixth year, and his name stood the twelfth in a list of sixteen, as a sharer in the Blackfriars play-house. The chief difficulty lies in believing that he could have been known so early as the author of a tragedy having Hamlet for its hero; but this difficulty is much reduced by the circumstance, that we have no knowledge how often or how much he may have improved a piece of that kind even before the copy of 1603 was made up.

Again: It appears from Henslowe's accounts that a play of Hamlet was performed in the theatre at Newington Butts on the 9th of June, 1594. At this time, "my lord admirell men and my lord chamberlen men" were playing together at that theatre; the latter of whom was the company to which Shakespeare belonged. At the performance of Hamlet, Henslowe sets down nine shillings as his share of the receipts; whereas in case of new plays he commonly received a much larger sum. Besides, the item in question is without the mark which the manager usually prefixed in case of a new play; so that we may conclude the Hamlet of 1594 had at that time lost the feature of novelty. The question is, whether the Hamlet thus performed was Shakespeare's? That it was so, might naturally be inferred from the fact that the Lord Chamberlain's men were then playing there; besides, it has at least some probability, in that on the 11th of the same month Henslowe notes "The Taming of a Shrew" as having been performed at the same place. Whether this latter were Shakespeare's play, has been sufficiently considered in our Introduction to The Taming of the Shrew.

The next particular, bearing upon the subject, is from a tract by Thomas Lodge, printed in 1596, and entitled "Wit's Misery, or The World's Madness, discovering the incarnate Devils of the Age;" where one of the devils is said to be "a foul lubber, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *Ghost*, who cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge*." All these three notices are regarded by Malone and some others as referring to another play of Hamlet, which they suppose to have been written by Thomas Kyd; though their only reason for thinking there was such another play, is the alleged improbability of the Poet's having so early written on that subject.

It is to be observed, further, that a copy of Speight's Chaucer once owned by Gabriel Harvey, and having his name written in it, together with the date of 1598, has, among others, the following manuscript note: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, have it in them to please the wiser sort." This, however, does not seem to infer any thing with certainty as to time; since the name and date may have been written when Harvey purchased the book, and the note at some later period.

The only other contemporary notice to be quoted of the play, is an entry at the Stationers' by James Roberts, on the 26th of July, 1602: "A Book,—The Revenge of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain his Servants." As the quarto of 1604 was printed by James Roberts, we may reasonably conclude that this entry refers to the "enlarged" form of the play. Why the publication was not made till two years later, is beyond our reach · perhaps it was because no copy could be obtained for the press, until the maimed and stolen issue of 1603 had rendered it necessary to put forth an edition in self-defence, "according to the true and perfect copy." We have repeatedly seen that in the spring of 1603 "the Lord Chamberlain's Servants" became "His Majesty's Servants;" or, as they are called in the title-page of 1603, "His Highness Servants."

A piece of internal evidence fixes the date of the enlarged Hamlet soon after the 22d of June, 1600. It is the reason assigned by Rosencrantz, in Act ii. sc. 2, why the players have left the city and gone to travelling: "I think their inhibition comes by means of the late innovation." What this "inhibition" was, has been set forth in our Introduction to Twelfth Night; so that it need not be repeated here. The passage just quoted is not in the copy of 1603: a different reason is there assigned why the players travel: "*Novelty* carries it away; for the principal public audience that came to them are turned to *private* plays, and the humour of children."

Plays were acted in private by the choir-boys of the Chapel Royal and of St. Paul's before 1590, several of Lyly's pieces being used in that way. It appears that in 1591 these juvenile performances had been suppressed; as in the printer's address prefixed to Lyly's Endymion, which was published that year, we are told that, "since the plays in Paul's were dissolved, there are certain comedies come to my hand." Nash, in his "Have with You to Saffron Waldon," published in 1596, expresses a wish to see the "plays at Paul's up again;" which infers that at that time the interdict was still in force. In 1600, however, we find that the interdict had been taken off, a play attributed to Lyly being that year "acted by the children of Paul's." From this time forward

these juvenile performances appear to have been kept up, both in private and in public, until 1612, when, on account of the abuses attending them, they were again suppressed.

It would seem, then, that the reason assigned in the text of 1603 refers to a period when the acting of children was only in *private*, and was regarded as a *novelty;* whereas at the time of the later text the qualities of novelty and privacy had been removed. And it appears not improbable, that the taking-off of the interdict before 1600, and the consequent revival of plays by children, was "the late innovation" by means of which the "inhibition" had been brought about. Howbeit, so far as regards the date of the older text, the argument is by no means conclusive, and we are not for laying any very marked stress upon it; but it seems, at all events, worth considering. Its bearing as to the time of the later text is obvious enough, and will hardly be questioned.

Knight justly remarks, that the mention of Termagant and Herod, which occurs in the quarto of 1603, refers to a time when those personages trod the stage in pageants and mysteries; and that the directions to the players, as given in the older text, point to the customs and conduct of the stage, as it was before Shakespeare had, by his example and influence, raised and reformed it. The following passage from the first copy will show what we mean: "And then you have some again, that keeps one suit of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel; and gentlemen quote his jests down in their tables before they come to the play, as thus: 'Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge?' and, 'You owe me a quarter's wages;' and, 'My coat wants a cullison;' and, 'Your beer is sour;' and, blabbering with his lips, and thus keeping in his cinque-a-pace of jests, when, God knows, the warm clown cannot make a jest unless by chance, as the blind man catcheth a hare." From the absence of all this in the enlarged copy, we should naturally conclude that the evil referred to had at that time been done away, or at least much diminished. And indeed a comparison of the two texts in this part of the play will satisfy any one, we think, that, during the interval between them, the stage had been greatly elevated and improved: divers bad customs, no doubt, had been "reformed indifferently;" so that the point still remaining was, to "reform them altogether."

As to the general character of the additions in the enlarged Hamlet, it is to be noted that these are mostly in the contemplative and imaginative parts; very little being added in the way of action and incident. And in respect of the former there is indeed no comparison between the two copies: the difference is literally immense, and of such a kind as evinces a most astonishing growth of intellectual power and resource. In the earlier text, we have little more than a naked, though, in the main, well-ordered and firm knit skeleton, which, in the later, is everywhere replenished and glorified with large, rich volumes of thought and poetry;

where all that is incidental or circumstantial is made subordinate to the living energies of mind and soul. The difference is like that of a lusty grove of hickory or maple brethren in December with the winds whistling through them, and in June with the birds singing in them.

So that the enlarged Hamlet probably marks the germination of that "thoughtful philosophy," as Hallam calls it, which never afterwards deserted the Poet; though time did indeed abate its excess, and reduce it under his control; whereas it here overflows all bounds, and sweeps onward unchecked, so as to form the very character of the piece. Moreover, this play, in common with several others, though in a greater degree, bears symptoms of a much saddened and aggrieved, not to say embittered temper of mind: it is fraught, more than any other, with a spirit of profound and melancholy cogitation; as if written under the influence of some stroke that had shaken the Poet's disposition with thoughts beyond the reaches of his soul; or as if he were casting about in the darker and sterner regions of meditation in quest of an antidote for some deep distress that had touched him. For there can be little doubt, that the birth and first stages of "the philosophic mind" were in his case, for some cause unknown to us, hung about with clouds and gloom, which, however, were afterwards blown off, and replaced by an atmosphere of unblemished clearness and serenity. Hallam has remarked upon this introversive and darkly-brooding season of the Poet's mind, in a superb strain of criticism, which has been quoted in our Introduction to Measure for Measure.

From all which may be gathered how appropriately this play has been described as a tragedy of thought. Such is indeed its character. And in this character it stands alone, and that, not only of Shakespeare's dramas, but of all the dramas in being. As for action, the play has little that can be properly so called. The scenes are indeed richly diversified with incident; but the incidents, for the most part, engage our attention only as serving to start and shape the hero's far-reaching trains of reflection; themselves being lost sight of in the wealth of thought and sentiment which they call forth. In no other of Shakespeare's plays does the interest turn so entirely on the hero; and that, not because he overrides the other persons and crushes their individuality under, as Richard III. does; but because his life is all centered in the mind, and the effluence of his mind and character is around all the others and within them; so that they are little interesting to us, but for his sake, for the effects they have upon him, and the thoughts he has of them. Observe, too, that of all dramatic personages, "out of sight, out of mind," can least be said of him: on the contrary, he is never more in mind, than when out of sight; and whenever others come in sight, the effect still is, to remind us of him, and deepen our interest in him

The character of Hamlet has caused more of perplexity and discussion than any other in the whole range of art. He has a wonderful interest for all, yet none can explain him; and perhaps he is therefore the more interesting because inexplicable. We have found by experience, that one seems to understand him better after a little study than after a great deal, and that the less one sees *into* him, the more apt one is to think he sees *through* him; in which respect he is indeed like nature herself. We shall not presume to make clear what so many better eyes have found and left dark. The most we can hope to do is, to start a few thoughts, not towards explaining him, but towards showing why he cannot be explained; nor to reduce the variety of opinions touching him, but rather to suggest whence that variety proceeds, and why.

One man considers Hamlet great, but wicked; another, good, but weak; a third, that he lacks courage, and dare not act; a fourth, that he has too much intellect for his will, and so thinks away the time of action: some conclude him honestly mad; others, that his madness is wholly feigned. Yet, notwithstanding this diversity of conclusions, all agree in thinking and speaking of him as an actual person. It is easy to invest with plausibility almost any theory regarding him, but very hard to make any theory comprehend the whole subject; and, while all are impressed with the truth of the character, no one is satisfied with another's view of it. The question is, why such unanimity as to his being a man, and at the same time such diversity as to what sort of a man he is?

Now, in reasoning about facts, we are apt to forget what complex and many-sided things they are. We often speak of them as very simple and intelligible; and in some respects they are so; but, in others, they are inscrutably mysterious. For they present manifold elements and qualities in unity and consistency, and so carry a manifoldness of meaning which cannot be gathered up into logical expression. Even if we seize and draw out severally all the properties of a fact, still we are as far as ever from producing the effect of their combination. Thus there is somewhat in facts that still eludes the cunningest analysis; like the vital principle, which no subtlety of dissection can grasp or overtake. It is this mysteriousness of facts that begets our respect for them: could we master them, we should naturally lose our regard for them. For, to see round and through a thing, implies a sort of conquest over it; and when we seem to have conquered a thing, we are apt to put off that humility towards it, which is both the better part of wisdom, and also our key to the remainder.

This complexity of facts supposes the material of innumerable theories: for, in such a multitude of properties belonging to one and the same thing, every man's mind may take hold of some special consideration above the rest; and when we look at facts through a given theory they naturally seem to prove but that one,

though they would really afford equal proof of fifty others. Hence there come to be divers opinions respecting the same thing; ano men arrive at opposite conclusions, forgetting, that of a given fact many things may be true in their place and degree, yet none of them true in such sort as to impair the truth of others.

Now, Hamlet is all varieties of character in one; he is continually turning up a new side, appearing under a new phase, undergoing some new development; so that he touches us at all points, and, as it were, surrounds us. This complexity and versatility of character are often mistaken for inconsistency: hence the contradictory opinions respecting him, different minds taking very different impressions of him, and even the same mind, at different times. In short, like other facts, he is many-sided, so that many men of many minds may see themselves in different sides of him; but, when they compare notes, and find him agreeing with them all, they are perplexed, and are apt to think him inconsistent: in so great a diversity of elements, they lose the perception of identity, and cannot see how he can be so many, and still be but one. Doubtless he seems the more real for this very cause; our inability to see through him, or to discern the source and manner of his impression upon us, brings him closer to nature, makes him appear the more like a fact, and so strengthens his hold on our thoughts. For, where there is life, there must needs be more or less of change, the very law of life being identity in mutability; and in Hamlet the variety and rapidity of changes are so managed as only to infer the more intense, active, and prolific vitality; though, in so great a multitude of changes, it is extremely difficult to seize the constant principle.

Coleridge's view of Hamlet is much celebrated, and the currency it has attained shows there must be something of truth in it. "In the healthy processes of the mind," says he, "a balance is constantly maintained between the impressions from outward objects and the inward operations of the intellect: for, if there be an overbalance in the contemplative faculty, man thereby becomes the creature of mere meditation, and loses his natural power of action. Now, one of Shakespeare's modes of creating characters is, to conceive any one intellectual or moral faculty in morbid excess, and then to place himself, Shakespeare, thus mutilated or diseased, under given circumstances. In Hamlet he seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses, and our meditation on the workings of our minds — an *equilibrium* between the real and the imaginary worlds. In Hamlet this balance is disturbed: his thoughts and the images of his fancy are far more vivid than his actual perceptions; and his very perceptions, instantly passing through the *medium* of his contemplations, acquire, as they pass, a form and colour not naturally their own. Hence we see a great, an almost enormous, intellectual activity, and a

proportionate aversion to real action, consequent upon it, with all its symptoms and accompanying qualities. This character Shakespeare places in circumstances, under which it is obliged to act on the spur of the moment:— Hamlet is brave and careless of death; but he vacillates from sensibility, and procrastinates from thought, and loses the power of action in the energy of resolve.

"The effect of this overbalance of the imaginative power is beautifully illustrated in the everlasting broodings and superfluous activities of Hamlet's mind, which, unseated from its healthy relation, is constantly occupied with the world within, and abstracted from the world without; giving substance to shadows, and throwing a mist over all common-place actualities. It is the nature of thought to be indefinite;— definiteness belongs to external imagery alone. Hence it is that the sense of sublimity arises, not from the sight of an outward object, but from the beholder's reflection upon it; not from the sensuous impression, but from the imaginative reflex. Few have seen a celebrated waterfall without feeling something akin to disappointment: it is only subsequently that the image comes back full into the mind, and brings with it a train of grand or beautiful associations. Hamlet feels this; his senses are in a trance, and he looks upon external things as hieroglyphics."

This is certainly very noble criticism; and our main ground of doubt as to the view thus given is, that Hamlet seems bold, energetic, and prompt enough in action, when his course is free of moral impediments; as, for instance, in his conduct on shipboard, touching the commission, where his powers of thought all range themselves under the leading of a most vigorous and steady will. Our own belief is, though we are far from absolute in it, that the Poet's design was, to conceive a man great, perhaps equally so, in all the elements of character, mental, moral, and practical; and then to place him in such circumstances, bring such motives to bear upon him, and open to him such sources of influence and reflection, that all his greatness should be morally forced to display itself in the form of thought, even his strength of will having no practicable outlet but through the energies of the intellect. A brief review of the delineation will, if we mistake not, discover some reason for this belief.

Up to the time of his father's death, Hamlet's mind, busied in developing its innate riches, had found room for no sentiments towards others but generous trust and confidence. Delighted with the appearances of good, and shielded by his rank from the naked approaches of evil, he had no motive to pry through the semblance into the reality of surrounding characters. The ideas of princely elevation and moral rectitude, springing up simultaneously in his mind, had intertwisted their fibres closely together. While the chaste forms of young imagination had kept his own heart pure, he had framed his conceptions of others according to the model within himself. To the feelings of the son, the prince, the gentle-

man, the friend, the scholar, had lately been joined those of the lover; and his heart, oppressed with its own hopes and joys, had breathed forth its fulness in "almost all the holy vows of heaven." In his father he had realized the ideal of character which he aspired to exemplify. Whatsoever noble images and ideas he had gathered from the fields of poetry and philosophy, he had learned to associate with that venerated name. To the throne he looked forward with hope and fear, as an elevation for diffusing the blessings of a wise sovereignty, and receiving the homage of a grateful submission. As the crown was elective, he regarded his prospects of attaining it as suspended on the continuance of his father's life, till he could discover in himself such virtues as would secure him the succession. In his father's death, therefore, he lost the main stay of both his affections and his pretensions.

Notwithstanding, the foundations of his peace and happiness were yet unshaken. The prospects of the man were perhaps all the brighter, that those of the prince had faded. The fireside and the student's bower were still open to him; truth and beauty, thought and affection, had not hidden their faces from him: with a mind saddened, but not diseased, his bereavement served to deepen and chasten his sensibilities, without untuning their music. Cunning and quick of heart to discover and appropriate the remunerations of life, he could compensate the loss of some objects with a more free and tranquil enjoyment of such as remained. In the absence of his father, he could concentrate upon his mother the feelings hitherto shared between them; and, in cases like this, religion towards the dead comes in to heighten and sanctify an affection for the living. Even if his mother too had died, the loss, however bitter, would not have been baleful to him; for, though separated from the chief objects of love and trust and reverence, he would still have retained those sentiments themselves unimpaired. It is not his mother, however, but his faith in her, that he has to part with. To his prophetic soul, the hasty and incestuous marriage brings at once conviction of his mother's infidelity, and suspicion of his uncle's treachery, to his father. Where he has most loved and trusted, there he has been most deceived. The sadness of bereavement now settles into the deep gloom of a wounded spirit, and life seems rather a burden to be borne than a blessing to be cherished. In this condition, the appearance of the Ghost, its awful disclosures, and more awful injunctions, confirming the suspicion of his uncle's treachery, and implicating his mother in the crime, complete his desolation of mind.

Nevertheless, he still retains all his integrity and uprightness of soul. In the depths of his being, even below the reach of consciousness, there lives the instinct and impulse of a moral law with which the injunction of the Ghost stands in direct conflict. What is the quality of the act required of him? Nothing less, indeed, than to kill at once his uncle, his mother's husband, and his king;

and this, not as an act of justice, and in a judicial manner, but as an act of revenge, and by assassination! How shall he justify such a deed to the world? How vindicate himself from the very crime thus revenged? For, as he cannot subpœna the Ghost, the evidence on which he must act is in its nature available only in the court of his own conscience. To serve any good end either for himself or for others, the deed must so stand in the public eye, as it does in his own; else he will, in effect, be setting an example and precedent of murder, not of justice.

Thus Hamlet's conscience is divided, not merely against his inclination, but against itself. However he multiplies to himself reasons and motives for the deed, there yet springs up, from a depth in his nature which reflection has not fathomed, an overruling impulse against it. So that we have the triumph of a pure moral nature over temptation in its most imposing form, — the form of a sacred call from heaven, or what is such to him. He thinks he ought to do the thing, resolves that he will do it, blames himself for not doing it; but there is a power within him which still outwrestles his purpose. In brief, the trouble lies not in himself, but in his situation; it arises from the impossibility of translating the outward call of duty into a free moral impulse; and until so translated he cannot perform it; for in such an undertaking he must act from himself, not from another.

This strife of incompatible duties seems the true source of Hamlet's practical indecision. His moral sensitiveness, shrinking from the dreadful mandate of revenge, throws him back upon his reflective powers, and sends him through the abysses of thought in quest of a reconciliation between his conflicting duties, that so he may shelter either the performance of the deed from the reproach of irreligion, or the non-performance from that of filial impiety. Moreover, on reflection he discerns something in the mandate that makes him question its source: even his filial reverence leads him first to regret, then to doubt, and finally to disbelieve, that his *father* has laid on him such an injunction. It seems more likely that the Ghost should be a counterfeit, than that his father should call him to such a deed. Thus his mind is set in quest of other proofs. But when, by the stratagem of the play, he has made the King's guilt unkennel itself, this demonstration again arrests his hand, because his own conscience is startled into motion by the revelations made from that of another. Seeking grounds of action in the workings of remorse, the very proofs, which to his mind would justify the inflicting of death, themselves spring from something worse than death.

And it should be remarked, withal, that by the very process of the case he is put in immediate contact with supernatural influences. The same voice that calls him to the undertaking also unfolds to him the retributions of futurity. The thought of that eternal blazon, which must not be to ears of flesh and blood

entrances him in meditation on the awful realities of the invisible world; so that, while nerved by a sense of the duty, he is at the same time shaken by a dread of the responsibility. Thus the Ghost works in Hamlet a sort of preternatural development: its disclosures bring forth into clear apprehension some moral ideas which before were but dim presentiments in him. It is as if he were born into the other world before dying out of this. And what is thus developed in him is at strife with the injunction laid upon him.

Thus it appears, that Hamlet is distracted with a purpose which he is at once too good a son to dismiss, and too good a man to perform. Under an injunction with which he knows not what to do, he casts about, now for excuses, now for censures, of his non-performance; and religion still prevents him from doing what filial piety reproves him for leaving undone. Not daring to abandon the design of killing the King, he is yet morally incapable of forming any plan for doing it: he can only go through the work, as indeed he does at last, under a sudden frenzy of excitement, caused by some immediate provocation; not so much acting, as being acted upon; rather as an instrument of Providence, than as a self-determining agent.

Properly speaking, then, Hamlet, we think, does not lack force of will. In him, will is strictly subject to reason and conscience; and it rather shows strength than otherwise in refusing to move in conflict with them. We are apt to measure men's force of will only by what they do, whereas the true measure thereof often lies rather in what they do *not* do. On this point, Mr. E. P. Whipple suggests, that "will is a relative term; and, even admitting that Hamlet possessed more will than many who act with decision, the fact that his other powers were larger in proportion justifies the common belief, that he was deficient in energy of purpose." But this, it strikes us, does not exactly meet the position; which is, that force of will is shown rather in holding still, than in moving, where the moral understanding is not satisfied; and that Hamlet seems to lack rather the power of seeing what he ought to do, than of doing what he sees to be right. The question is, whether the peculiarity of this representation is not meant to consist in the hero being so placed, that strength of will has its proper outcome rather in thinking than in acting; the working of his whole mind being thus rendered as anomalous as his situation; which is just what the subject requires. Will it be said, that Hamlet's moral scruples are born of an innate reluctance to act? that from defect of will he *wishes* to hold back, and so *hunts* after motives for doing so? We should ourselves be much inclined to say so, but that those scruples seem to be the native and legitimate offspring of reason There being, as we think, sufficient grounds for them out of him we cannot refer them to any infirmity of his as their source.

It is true, Hamlet takes to himself all the blame of his indecision. This, we think, is one of the finest points in the delinea-

tion. For true virtue does not publish itself: radiating from the heart through the functions of life, its transpirations are so free and smooth and deep as to be scarce heard even by the subject of them. Moreover, in his conflict of duties, Hamlet naturally thinks he is taking the wrong one; the calls of the claim he meets being hushed by satisfaction, while those of the other are increased by disappointment. The current that we go with is naturally unnoticed by us; but that which we go against compels our notice by the struggle it puts us to. In this way Hamlet comes to mistake his clearness of conscience for moral insensibility. For even so a good man is apt to think he has not consience enough, because it is quiet; a bad man, that he has too much, because it troubles him; which accounts for the readiness of bad men to supply their neighbours with conscience.

But perhaps the greatest perplexity of all in Hamlet's character turns on the point of his "autic disposition." Whether his madness be real or feigned, or sometimes the one, sometimes the other, or partly real, partly feigned, are questions which, like many that arise on similar points in actual life, perhaps can never be finally settled either way. Aside from the common impossibility of deciding precisely where sanity ends and insanity begins, there are peculiarities in Hamlet's conduct, — resulting from the minglings of the supernatural in his situation, — which, as they transcend the reach of our ordinary experience, can hardly be reduced to any thing more than probable conjecture. If sanity consists in a certain harmony between a man's actions and his circumstances, it must be hard indeed to say what would be insanity in a man so circumstanced as Hamlet.

That his mind is thrown from its propriety, shaken from its due forms and measures of working, excited into irregular, fevered action, is evident enough: from the deeply-agitating experiences he has undergone, the horrors of guilt preternaturally laid open to him, and the terrible ministry enjoined upon him, he could not be otherwise. His mind is indeed full of unhealthy perturbation, being necessarily made so by the overwhelming thoughts that press upon him from without; but it nowhere appears enthralled by illusions spun from itself; there are no symptoms of its being torn from its proper holdings, or paralyzed in its power of steady thought and coherent reasoning. Once only, at the grave of Ophelia, does he lose his self-possession; and the result in this case only goes to prove how firmly he retains it everywhere else.

It is matter of common observation, that extreme emotions naturally express themselves by their opposites; as extreme sorrow, in laughter, extreme joy, in tears; utter despair, in a voice of mirth; a wounded spirit, in gushes of humour. Hence Shakespeare heightens the effect of some of his awfulest scenes by making the persons indulge in flashes of merriment; for what so appalling as to see a person laughing and playing from excess of

anguish or terror? Now, the expressions of mirth, in such cases are plainly neither the reality nor the affectation of mirth. People, when overwhelmed with distress, certainly are not in a condition either to *feel* merry or to *feign* mirth; yet they do sometimes *express* it. The truth is, such extremes naturally and spontaneously express themselves by their opposites. In like manner, Hamlet's madness, it seems to us, is neither real nor affected, but a sort of natural and spontaneous imitation of madness; the triumph of his reason over his passion naturally expressing itself in the tokens of insanity, just as the agonies of despair naturally vent themselves in flashes of mirth. Accordingly, Coleridge remarks, that "Hamlet's wildness is but half false; he plays that subtle trick of pretending to act, only when he is very near really being what he acts."

Again: It is not uncommon for men, in times of great depression, to fly off into prodigious humours and eccentricities. We have known people under such extreme pressure to throw their most intimate friends into consternation by their extravagant playings and frolickings. Such symptoms of wildness are sometimes the natural, though perhaps spasmodic, reaction of the mind against the weight that oppresses it. The mind thus spontaneously becomes eccentric in order to recover or preserve its centre Even so Hamlet's aberrations seem the conscious, half-voluntary bending of his faculties beneath an overload of thought, to keep them from breaking. His mind being deeply disturbed, agitated to its centre, but not disorganized, those irregularities are rather a throwing-off of that disturbance than a giving-way to it.

On the whole, therefore, Goethe's celebrated criticism seems quite beside the mark: nevertheless, as it is the calm judgment of a great mind, besides being almost too beautiful in itself not to be true, we gladly subjoin it. "It is clear to me," says he, "that Shakespeare's intention was, to exhibit the effects of a great action imposed as a duty upon a mind too feeble for its accomplishment. In this sense I find the character consistent through out. Here is an oak planted in a china vase, proper to receive only the most delicate flowers: the roots strike out, and the vessel flies to pieces. A pure, noble, highly moral disposition, but without that energy of soul which constitutes the hero, sinks under a load which it can neither support nor resolve to abandon altogether. *All* his obligations are sacred to him; but this alone is above his powers. An impossibility is required at his hands; not an impossibility in itself, but that which is so to him."

Still we have to confess, as stated before, that there is a mystery about Hamlet, which baffles all our resources of criticism; and our remarks should be taken as expressing rather what we have thought on the subject than any settled judgment. We will dismiss the theme by quoting what seems to us a very admirable passage from a paper in Blackwood's Magazine, vol. ii., signed

'T. C." The writer is speaking of Hamlet: "In him, his character, and his situation, there is a concentration of all the interests that belong to humanity. There is scarcely a trait of frailty or of grandeur, which may have endeared to us our most beloved friends in real life, that is not found in Hamlet. Undoubtedly Shakespeare loved him beyond all his other creations. Soon as he appears on the stage, we are satisfied: when absent, we long for his return. This is the only play which exists almost altogether in the character of one single person. Who ever knew a Hamlet in real life? yet who, ideal as the character is, feels not its reality? This is the wonder. We love him not, we think of him not, because he was witty, because he was melancholy, because he was filial; but we love him because he existed, and was himself. This is the grand sum-total of the impression. I believe that of every other character, either in tragic or epic poetry, the story makes a part of the conception; but, of Hamlet, the deep and permanent interest is the conception of himself. This seems to belong, not to the character being more perfectly drawn, but to there being a more intense conception of individual human life than perhaps in any other human composition; that is, a being with springs of thought, and feeling, and action, deeper than we can search. These springs rise up from an unknown depth, and in that depth there seems to be a *oneness* of being which we cannot distinctly behold, but which we believe to be there; and thus irreconcileable circumstances, floating on the surface of his actions, have not the effect of making us doubt the truth of the general picture."

From the same eloquent paper we must make another extract touching the apparition of "that fair and warlike form, in which the majesty of buried Denmark did sometimes march:" "With all the mighty power which this tragedy possesses over us, arising from qualities now very generally described; yet, without that kingly shadow, who throws over it such preternatural grandeur, it could never have gained so universal an ascendancy over the minds of men. Now, the reality of a ghost is measured to that state of imagination in which we ought to be held for the fullest powers of tragedy. The appearance of such a phantom at once throws open those recesses of the inner spirit over which flesh was closing. Magicians, thunder-storms, and demons produce upon me something of the same effect. I feel myself brought instantaneously back to the creed of childhood. Imagination then seems not a power which I exert, but an impulse which I obey. Thus does the Ghost in Hamlet carry us into the presence of eternity.

"Never was a more majestic spirit more majestically revealed. The shadow of his kingly grandeur and his warlike might rests massily upon him. He passes before us sad, silent, and stately. He brings the whole weight of the tragedy in his disclosures. His speech is ghost-like, and blends with ghost conceptions. The

popular memory of his words proves how profoundly they sink into our souls. The preparation for his first appearance is most solemn. The night-watch, — the more common effect on the two soldiers, — the deeper effect on the next party, and their speculations, — Horatio's communication with the shadow, that seems as it were half-way between theirs and Hamlet's, — his adjurations, — the degree of impression which they produce on the Ghost's mind, who is about to speak but for the due ghost-like interruption of the bird of morning; — all these things lead our minds up to the last pitch of breathless expectation; and while yet the whole weight of mystery is left hanging over the play, we feel that some dread disclosure is reserved for Hamlet's ear, and that an apparition from the world unknown is still a partaker of the noblest of all earthly affections."

Horatio is a very noble character; but he moves so quietly in the drama, that his modest worth and solid manliness have not had justice done them. Should we undertake to go through the play without him, we should then feel how much of the best spirit and impression of the scenes is owing to his presence and character. For he is the medium through which many of the hero's finest and noblest traits are conveyed to us; yet himself so clear and transparent that he scarcely catches the attention. Mr. Verplanck, we believe, was the first to give him his due. "While," says he, "every other character in this play, Ophelia, Polonius, and even Osrick, has been analyzed and discussed, it is remarkable that no critic has stept forward to notice the great beauty of Horatio's character, and its exquisite adaptation to the effect of the piece His is a character of great excellence and accomplishment; but while this is distinctly shown, it is but sketched, not elaborately painted. His qualities are brought out only by single and seemingly-accidental touches; the whole being toned down to a quiet and unobtrusive beauty that does not tempt the mind to wander from the main interest, which rests alone upon Hamlet; while it is yet distinct enough to increase that interest, by showing him worthy to be Hamlet's trusted friend in life, and the chosen defender of his honour after death. Such a character, in the hands of another author, would have been made the centre of some secondary plot. But here, while he commands our respect and esteem, he never for a moment divides a passing interest with the Prince. He does not break in upon the main current of our feelings. He contributes only to the general effect; so that it requires an effort of the mind to separate him for critical admiration."

The main features of Polonius have been seized and set forth by Dr. Johnson with the hand of a master. It is one of the best pieces of personal criticism ever penned. "Polonius," says he, "is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and

declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is designed to rid ridicule the practice of these times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained This part of his character is accidental, the rest natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it has become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his depositaries of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but, as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to the dereliction of his faculties; he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recover the leading principle, and fall into his former train. The idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius."

In all this Polonius is the exact antithesis of Hamlet, though Hamlet doubtless includes him, as the heavens do the earth. A man of but one method, that of intrigue; with his fingers ever itching to pull the wires of some intricate plot; and without any sense or perception of times and occasions; he is called to act in a matter where such arts and methods are peculiarly unfitting, and therefore only succeeds in over-reaching himself. Thus in him we have the type of a superannuated politician, and all his follies and blunders spring from undertaking to act the politician where he is most especially required to be a man. From books, too, he has gleaned maxims, but not gained development; sought to equip, not feed, his mind out of them: he has therefore made books his idols, and books have made him pedantic.

To such a mind, or rather half-mind, the character of Hamlet must needs be a profound enigma. It takes a whole man to know such a being as Hamlet; and Polonius is but the attic story of a man! As in his mind the calculative faculties have eaten out the perceptive, of course his inferences are seldom wrong, his premises seldom right. Assuming Hamlet to be thus and so, he reasons and acts most admirably in regard to him; but the fact is, he cannot *see* Hamlet; has no eye for the true premises of the case; and, being wrong in these, his very correctness of logic makes him but the more ridiculous. His method of coming at the meaning of men, is by reading them backwards; and this method, used upon such a character as Hamlet, can but betray the user's infirmity.

Shakespeare's skill in revealing a character through its most characteristic transpirations is finely displayed in the directions Polonius gives his servant, for detecting the habits and practices of his absent son. Here the old politician is perfectly at home; his mind seems to revel in the mysteries of wire-pulling and trap-setting. In the Prince, however, he finds an impracticable sub

ject; here all his strategy is nonplussed, and himself caught in the trap he sets to catch the truth. The mere torch of policy, nature or Hamlet, who is an embodiment of nature, blows him out; so that, in attempting to throw light on the Prince, he just rays out nothing but smoke. The sport of circumstances, it was only by a change of circumstances that Hamlet came to know him. Once the honoured minister of his royal father, now the despised tool of that father's murderer, Hamlet sees in him only the crooked, supple time-server; and the ease with which he baffles and plagues the old fox shows how much craftier one *can* be who scorns craft, than one who courts it.

Habits of intrigue having extinguished in Polonius the powers of honest insight and special discernment, he therefore perceives not the unfitness of his old methods to the new exigency; while at the same time his faith in the craft, hitherto found so successful, stuffs him with overweening assurance. Hence, also, that singular but most characteristic specimen of grannyism, namely, his pedantic and impertinent dallying with artful turns of thought and speech amidst serious business; where he appears not unlike a certain person who "could speak no sense in several languages." Superannuated politicians, indeed, like him, seldom have any strength but as they fall back upon the resources of memory: out of these, the ashes, so to speak, of extinct faculties, they may seem wise after the fountains of wisdom are dried up within them; as a man who *has lost his sight* may seem to distinguish colours, so long as he refrains from speaking of the colours that are before him.

Of all Shakespeare's heroines, the impression of Ophelia is perhaps the most difficult of analysis, partly because she is so real, partly because so undeveloped. Like Cordelia, she is brought forward but little in the play, yet the whole play seems full of her. Her very silence utters her: unseen, she is missed, and so thought of the more: when absent in person, she is still present in effect, by what others bring from her. Whatsoever grace comes from Polonius and the Queen is of her inspiring: Laertes is scarce regarded but as he loves his sister: of Hamlet's soul, too, she is the sunrise and morning hymn. The soul of innocence and gentleness, wisdom seems to radiate from her insensibly, as fragrance is exhaled from flowers. It is in such forms that heaven most frequently visits us!

Ophelia's situation much resembles Imogen's; their characters are in marked contrast. Both appear amid the corruptions of a wicked court; Ophelia escapes them by insensibility of their presence, Imogen, by determined resistance: The former is unassailable in her innocence; the latter, unconquerable in her strength: Ignorance protects Ophelia, knowledge, Imogen: The conception of vice has scarce found its way into Ophelia's mind; in Imogen the daily perception of vice has but called for a power to repe it.

In Ophelia, again, as in Desdemona, the comparative want of intelligence, or rather intellectuality, is never felt as a defect. She fills up the idea of excellence just as completely as if she had the intellect of Shakespeare himself. In the rounded equipoise of her character we miss not the absent element, because there is no vacancy to be supplied; and high intellect would strike us rather as a superfluity than a supplement; its voice would rather drown than complete the harmony of the other tones.

Ophelia is exhibited in the utmost ripeness and mellowness, both of soul and sense, to impressions from without. With her susceptibilities just opening to external objects, her thoughts are so engaged on these as to leave no room for self-contemplation. This exceeding impressibility is the source at once of her beauty and her danger. From the lips and eyes of Hamlet she has drunk in pledges of his love, but has never heard the voice of her own; and knows not how full her heart is of Hamlet, because she has not a single thought or feeling there at strife with him. Mrs. Jameson rightly says, "she is far more conscious of being loved than of loving; and yet loving in the silent depths of her young heart far more than she is loved." For it is a singular fact that, though from Hamlet we have many disclosures, and from Ophelia only concealments, there has been much doubt of his love, but never any of hers. Ophelia's silence as to her own passion has been sometimes misderived from a wish to hide it from others; but, in truth, she seems not to be aware of it herself; and she unconsciously betrays it in the modest reluctance with which she yields up the secret of Hamlet's courtship. The extorted confession of what she has received reveals how much she has given; the soft tremblings of her bosom being made the plainer by the delicate lawn of silence thrown over it. Even when despair is wringing her innocent young soul into an utter wreck, she seems not to know the source of her affliction; and the truth comes out only when her sweet mind, which once breathed such enchanting music, lies broken in fragments before us, and the secrets of her maiden heart are hovering on her demented tongue.

One of the bitterest ingredients in poor Ophelia's cup is the belief that by her repulse of Hamlet she has dismantled his fair and stately house of reason; and when, forgetting the wounds with which her own pure spirit is bleeding, over the spectacle of that "unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth blasted with ecstacy," she meets his, "I loved you not," with the despairing sigh, "I was the more deceived," we see that she feels not the sundering of the ties that bind her sweetly-tempered faculties in harmony. Yet we blame not Hamlet, for he is himself but a victim of an inexorable power which is spreading its ravages through him over another life as pure and heavenly as his own. Standing on the verge of an abyss which is yawning to engulph himself, his very effort to frighten her back from it only hurries her in before him

To snatch another jewel from Mrs. Jameson's casket,—"He has no thought to link his terrible destiny with hers: he cannot marry her: he cannot reveal to her, young, gentle, innocent as she is, the terrific influences which have changed the whole current of his life and purposes. In his distraction he overacts the painful part to which he has tasked himself; like that judge of the Areopagus who, being occupied with graver matters, flung from him the little bird which had sought refuge in his bosom, and with such angry violence, that he unwittingly killed it."

Ophelia's insanity exhausts the fountains of human pity. It is one of those mysterious visitings over which we can only brood in silent sympathy and awe; which Heaven alone has a heart adequately to pity, and a hand effectually to heal. Its pathos were too much to be borne, but for the sweet incense that rises from her crushed spirit, as "she turns thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, to favour and to prettiness." Of her death what shall be said? The victim of crimes in which she has no share but as a sufferer, we hail with joy the event that snatches her from the rack of this world. The "snatches of old lauds," with which she chaunts, as it were, her own burial service, are like smiles gushing from the very heart of woe. We must leave her, with the words of Hazlitt: "O, rose of May! O, flower too soon faded! Her love, her madness, her death, are described with the truest touches of tenderness and pathos. It is a character which nobody but Shakespeare could have drawn in the way that he has done; and to the conception of which there is not the smallest approach, except in some of the old romantic ballads."

The Queen's affection for this lovely being is one of those unexpected strokes, so frequent in Shakespeare, which surprise us into reflection by their naturalness. That Ophelia should disclose a vein of goodness in the Queen, was necessary perhaps to keep us both from underrating the influence of the one, and from exaggerating the wickedness of the other. The love which she thus awakens tells us that her helplessness springs from innocence, not from weakness; and so serves to prevent the pity which her condition moves from lessening the respect due to her character.

Almost any other author would have depicted Gertrude without a single alleviating trait in her character. Beaumont and Fletcher would probably have made her simply frightful or loathsome, and capable only of exciting abhorrence or disgust; if, indeed, in her monstrous depravity she had not rather failed to excite any feeling. Shakespeare, with far more effect as well as far more truth, exhibits her with such a mixture of good and bad, as neither disarms censure nor precludes pity. Herself dragged along in the terrible train of consequences which her own guilt had a hand in starting, she is hurried away into the same dreadful abyss along with those whom she loves, and against whom she has sinned. In her tenderness towards Hamlet and Ophelia, we recognise the vir-

tues of the mother without in the least palliating the guilt of the wife; while the crimes in which she is an accomplice almost disappear in those of which she is the victim.

The plan of this drama seems to consist in the persons being represented as without plans; for, as Goethe happily remarks, "the hero is without any plan, but the play itself is full of plan." As the action, so far as there is any, is shaped and determined rather *for* the characters than *from* them, all their energies could the better be translated into thought. Hence of all the Poet's dramas this probably combines the greatest strength and diversity of faculties. Sweeping round the whole circle of human thought and passion, its alternations of amazement and terror; of lust, ambition, and remorse; of hope, love, friendship, anguish, madness, and despair; of wit, humour, pathos, poetry, and philosophy; now congealing the blood with horror, now melting the heart with pity, now launching the mind into eternity, now startling conscience from her lonely seat with supernatural visitings; — it unfolds indeed a world of truth, and beauty, and sublimity.

Of its varied excellences, only a few of the less obvious need be specified. The platform scenes are singularly charged with picturesque effect. The chills of a northern winter midnight seem creeping on us, as the heart-sick sentinels pass in view, and, steeped in moonlight and drowsiness, exchange their meeting and parting salutations. The thoughts and images that rise in their minds are just such as the anticipation of preternatural visions would be likely to inspire. As the bitter cold stupefies their senses, an indescribable feeling of dread and awe steals over them, preparing the mind to realise its own superstitious imaginings. And the feeling one has in reading these scenes is not unlike that of a child passing a grave-yard by moonlight. Out of the dim and drowsy moonbeams apprehension creates its own objects; his fancies embody themselves in surrounding facts; his fears give shape to outward things, while those things give outwardness to his fears. — The heterogeneous elements that are brought together in the grave-digging scene, with its strange mixture of songs and witticisms and dead men's bones, and its still stranger transitions of the grave, the sprightly, the meditative, the solemn, the playful, and the grotesque, make it one of the most wonderful yet most natural scenes in the drama. — In view of the terrible catastrophe, Goethe has the following weighty sentence: "It is the tendency of crime to spread its evils over innocence, as it is of virtue to diffuse its blessings over many who deserve them not; while, frequently, the author of the one or of the other is not, so far as we can see, punished or rewarded."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.
HAMLET, his Nephew, Son of the former King.
POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.
HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet.
LAERTES, Son of Polonius.
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, } Courtiers.
OSRICK, a Courtier.
Another Courtier.
A Priest.
MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, } Officers.
FRANCISCO, a Soldier.
REYNALDO, Servant to Polonius.
A Captain. Ambassadors.
The Ghost of Hamlet's Father.
FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway.
Two Grave-diggers.

GERTRUDE, Mother of Hamlet, and Queen.
OPHELIA, Daughter of Polonius.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Sailors, Messengers, and Attendants.

SCENE, Elsinore.

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET

ACT I.

SCENE I. Elsinore.

A Platform before the Castle.

FRANCISCO *on his Post.* *Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. WHO's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me:[1] stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

[1] That is, answer *me*, as I have the right to challenge *you*. Bernardo then gives in answer the watch-word, "Long live the king!"—"Compare," says Coleridge, "the easy language of common life, in which this drama commences, with the direful music and wild wayward rhythm and abrupt lyrics of the opening of Macbeth. The tone is quite familiar: there is no poetic description of night, no elaborate information conveyed by one speaker to another of what both had immediately before their senses; and yet nothing bordering on the comic on the one hand, nor any striving of the intellect on the other. It is precisely the language of sensation among men who feared no charge of effeminacy for feeling what they had no want of resolution to bear. Yet the armour, the dead silence, the watchfulness that first interrupts it, the welcome relief of the guard, the cold, the broken expressions of compelled attention to bodily feelings still under control,—all excellently accord with, and prepare for, the after gradual rise into tragedy; but, above all, into a tragedy, the interest of which is as eminently *ad et apud intra*, as that of Macbeth is directly *ad extra*." B.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve: get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring

Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch,[2] bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think I hear them. — Stand, ho! Who is there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier!
Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night.[3] [*Exit.*

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say.
What! is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

[2] *Rivals* are associates or partners. A brook, rivulet, or river, *rivus*, being a natural boundary between different proprietors, was owned by them in common; that is, they were *partners* in the right and use of it. From the strifes thus engendered, the *partners* came to be *contenders:* hence the ordinary sense of *rival.* See Antony and Cleopatra, Act iii. sc. 5, note 1. H.

[3] This salutation is an abbreviated form of, "May God give you a good night;" which has been still further abbreviated in the phrase, "Good night." H.

Hor What! has this thing appear'd again to-night?[4]

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us:
Therefore, I have intreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes,[5] and speak to it.

[4] The folio assigns this speech to Marcellus. The quartos are probably right, as Horatio comes on purpose to try his own eyes on the Ghost. — We quote from Coleridge again: "Bernardo's inquiry after Horatio, and the repetition of his name in his own presence indicate a respect or an eagerness that implies him as one of the persons who are in the foreground; and the scepticism attributed to him prepares us for Hamlet's after eulogy on him as one whose blood and judgment were happily commingled. Now, observe the admirable indefiniteness of the first opening out of the occasion of all this anxiety. The preparative information of the audience is just as much as was precisely necessary, and no more; — it begins with the uncertainty appertaining to a question: 'What! has *this thing* appear'd again to-night?' Even the word *again* has its *credibilizing* effect. Then Horatio, the representative of the ignorance of the audience, not himself, but by Marcellus to Bernardo, anticipates the common solution, — 'Tis but our fantasy;' upon which Marcellus rises into, — 'This dreaded sight twice seen of us;' which immediately afterwards becomes 'this apparition,' and that, too, an intelligent spirit that is to be spoken to!" H.

[5] That is, *make good* our vision, or *prove* our eyes to be *true*. *Approve* was often thus used in the sense of *confirm*. — Coleridge continues his comments on the scene thus: "Then comes the confirmation of Horatio's disbelief. — 'Tush, tush! 'twill not appear;' — and the silence with which the scene opened is again restored in the shivering feeling of Horatio sitting down, at such a time, and with the two eye-witnesses, to hear a story of a ghost, and that, too, of a ghost which had appeared twice before at the very same hour. In the deep feeling which Bernardo has of the solemn nature of what he is about to relate, he makes an effort to master his own imaginative terrors by an elevation of style, — itself a continuation of the effort, — and by turning off from the apparition as from something which would force him too deeply into himself

Hor Tush, tush! 'twill not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yond' same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course t' illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,[6] —
Mar. Peace! break thee off: look, where it comes again!

Enter the Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.
Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.[7]

to the outward objects, the realities of nature, which had accompanied it." H.

[6] This passage seems to contradict the critical law, that what is told makes a faint impression compared with what is beholden; for it does indeed convey to the mind more than the eye can see; whilst the interruption of the narrative at the very moment when we are most intensely listening for the sequel, and have our thoughts diverted from the dreaded sight in expectation of the desired, yet almost dreaded, tale, — this gives all the suddenness and surprise of the original appearance: "Peace! break thee off: look, where it comes again!" Note the judgment displayed in having the two persons present, who, as having seen the Ghost before, are naturally eager in confirming their former opinions; whilst the sceptic is silent, and, after having been twice addressed by his friends, answers with two hasty syllables, — "Most like," — and a confession of horror: "It harrows me with fear and wonder." — COLERIDGE. H.

[7] It was believed that a supernatural being could only be spoken to with effect by persons of learning; exorcisms being usually practised by the clergy in Latin. So in The Night Walker of Beaumont and Fletcher:

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like:—it harrows me with fear[8] and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by Heaven I charge thee, speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak! [*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale.
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself.
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he th' ambitious Norway combated:
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,

> "Let's call the butler up, for *he speaks Latin*,
> And that will daunt the devil."

[8] The first quarto reads, "it *horrors* me." To *harrow* is to *distress*, to vex, to disturb. To *harry* and to *harass* have the same origin. Milton has the word in Comus: "Amaz'd I stood, *harrow'd* with grief and fear."—"*Question* it," in the next line, is the reading of the folio; other old copies have "*Speak to* it."

He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.[9]
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump[10] at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not;
But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now; sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war?
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?
Who is't, that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,

[9] *Polacks* was used for *Polanders* in Shakespeare's time. *Sledded* is *sledged*; on a *sled* or *sleigh*. — *Parle*, in the preceding line, is the same as *parley*. H.

[10] So all the quartos. The folio reads *just*. *Jump* and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakespeare. So in Chapman's May Day, 161 "Your appointment was *jumpe* at three with me."

Did forfeit with his life all those his lands,
Which he stood seiz'd of,[11] to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same co-mart,
And carriage of the article design'd,[12]
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,[13]
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd up a list of landless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't:[14] which is no other
(As it doth well appear unto our state)
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative,[15] those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,

[11] This is the old legal phrase, still in use, for *held possession of*, or *was the rightful owner of*. H.

[12] *Co-mart* is the reading of the quartos; the folio reads, *cov'nant*. *Co-mart*, it is presumed, means *a joint bargain*. No other instance of the word is known. *Design'd* is here used in the sense of the Latin *designatus; carriage* in the sense of *import:* that is, the *import* of the article *marked out* for that purpose.

[13] That is, of *unimpeached* or *unquestioned* courage. To *improve* anciently signified to *impeach*, to *impugn*. Thus Florio: "Improbare, to *improove*, to impugn." The French have still *improuver*, with the same meaning; from *improbare*, Lat. Numerous instances of *improve* in this sense may be found in the writings of Shakespeare's time. — *Shark'd* is *snapped* up or *taken* up hastily. "*Scroccare* is properly to do any thing at another man's cost, *to shark or shift for any thing*. *Scroccolone*, a cunning shifter or *sharker* for any thing in time of need, namely *for victuals;* a tali trencher-man, *shifting up and down for belly cheer*." The quartos have *lawless* instead of *landless*, of the folio. *Lawless* may be right.

[14] *Stomach* is used for *determined purpose*.

[15] So the folio; the quartos, *compulsatory*, which carries the same meaning, but overfills the measure. H

The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.[16]

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so:
Well may it sort,[17] that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy[18] state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,[19]
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
And even the like precurse of fierce events—
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen[20] coming on—
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—

[16] *Romage*, now spelt *rummage*, is used for ransacking, or making a thorough search. — What follows, after this line down to the re-entrance of the Ghost, is wanting in the folio of 1623 and in the quarto of 1603. H.

[17] That is, *fit, suit*, or *agree:* often so used.

[18] That is, victorious; the *Palm* being the emblem of victory.

[19] There is evidently some corruption here, but it has hitherto baffled remedy, and seems to be given up as hopeless. Both the general structure of the sentence and the exigencies of the sense clearly favour the belief that *as stars* is a misprint for some word of two syllables, and *disasters* for some verb. For the first, Malone would read *astres;* to which Steevens objects that there is no authority for such a word. The passage in North's translation of Plutarch, Life of Julius Cæsar, which the Poet probably had in his eye, yields no certain help. See, however, Julius Cæsar, Act i. sc. 3. note 2, and Act ii. sc. 2, note 2. — "The moist star" is the moon. So in Marlowe's Hero and Leander: "Not that night-wand'ring pale and *watery star*." H.

[20] *Omen* is here put for *portentous event*. The use of the word is classical. H

Re-enter the Ghost.

But, soft! behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.[21] — Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing, may avoid,
O, speak!
Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*
Speak of it: — stay, and speak! — Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone. [*Exit Ghost.*

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

[21] It was believed that a person crossing the path of a spectre became subject to its malignant influence. Lodge's Illustrations of English History, speaking of Ferdinand, Earl of Derby, who died by witchcraft, as was supposed, in 1594, has the following: "On Friday there appeared a tall man, *who twice crossed him* swiftly; and when the earl came to the place where he saw this man, he fell sick." — Johnson remarks that this speech of Horatio is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions touching apparitions.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,[22]
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine:[23] and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.[24]
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;[25]
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes,[26] nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

[22] So the quartos; the folio has *day* instead of *morn*. Drayton gives the cock the same office:

> "And now *the cocke, the morning's trumpeter*,
> Play'd hunts-up for the day-star to appear." H.

[23] *Extravagant* is *extra-vagans*, wandering about, going beyond bounds. *Erring* is *erraticus*, straying or roving up and down. Mr. Douce has justly observed that "the epithets *extravagant* and *erring* are highly poetical and appropriate, and seem to prove that Shakespeare was not altogether ignorant of the Latin language."

[24] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus, giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius of Tyanna, says, "it vanished with a little gleam as soon as the cock crowed." There is a Hymn of Prudentius, and another of St. Ambrose, in which it is mentioned; and there are some lines in the latter very much resembling Horatio's speech.

[25] So read all the quartos but the first; the folio has, "no spirit *can walk* abroad." It is difficult which to prefer, both readings being so good. H.

[26] That is, no fairy *blasts*, or *infects*. See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iv. sc. 4, note 2. — *Gracious* is sometimes used

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yond' high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?[27]

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.

The Same. A Room of State.

Enter the King, the Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, *Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green; and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore, our sometime sister, now our queen,

by Shakespeare for *graced, favoured.* See As You Like It, Ac i. sc. 2, note 11. — The quartos have "*that* time," and further on, *eastward* for *eastern.*

[27] Note the inobtrusive and yet fully adequate mode of introducing the main character, "young Hamlet," upon whom is transferred all the interest excited for the acts and concerns of the king his father. — COLERIDGE.

Th' imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy, —
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye ;[1]
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, —
Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along : For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. — So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is : We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, —
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, — to suppress
His further gait herein ;[2] in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject. And we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope

[1] The same thought occurs in The Winter's Tale : "She had *one eye declin'd* for the loss of her husband, *another elevated* that the oracle was fulfill'd." There is an old proverbial phrase, "To laugh with one eye, and cry with the other."

[2] *Gait* here signifies *course, progress. Gait* for road, way path, is still in use. — *Subject*, next line but one, is used for *subjects*, or those *subject* to him. H.

Of these dilated articles allow.[3]
Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.—
[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.
And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit: what is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: What would'st thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.[4]
What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

[3] That is, the scope of these articles when dilated or explained in full. Such elliptical expressions are common with the Poet, from his having more thought than space. The rules of modern grammar would require *allows* instead of *allow*; but in old writers, when the noun and the verb have a genitive intervening, nothing is more common than for the verb to take the number of the genitive.—"In the king's speech," says Coleridge, "observe the set and pedantically antithetic form of the sentences when touching that which galled the heels of conscience,—the strain of undignified rhetoric; and yet in what follows concerning the public weal, a certain appropriate majesty." H.

[4] The various parts of the body enumerated are not more *allied, more necessary* to each other, than the king of Denmark is bound to your father to do him service

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave,
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.[5]

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will.[6]—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.[7]

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i'the sun.[8]

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids[9]

[5] The first three lines of this speech, all but "He hath, my lord," are wanting in the folio. H.

[6] The king's speech may be thus explained: "Take an auspicious hour, Laertes; be your time your own, and thy best virtues guide thee in spending of it at thy will." Johnson thought that we should read, "And *my* best graces." The editors had rendered this passage obscure by placing a colon at graces.

[7] *A little more than kin* has been rightly said to allude to the double relationship of the king to Hamlet, as uncle and step-father, his *kindred by blood* and *kindred by marriage*. By *less than kind* Hamlet means *degenerate and base*. "Going *out of kinde*," says Baret, "which goeth *out of kinde, which dothe or worketh dishonour to his kinred*. Degener; *forlignant*." "*Forligner*," says Cotgrave, "*to degenerate*, to grow *out of kind*, to differ in conditions with his ancestors." That *less than kind* and *out of kind* have the same meaning who can doubt?

[8] This is commonly thought to be a sarcastic play upon the words *sun* and *son*; as the being called *son* by his *uncle* naturally reminds Hamlet of his mother's incest. Perhaps, however, the true meaning is best explained by the following, from Grindal's Profitable Discourse, 1555: "In very deed they were brought from the good to the bad, and *from God's blessing*, as the proverbe is, *into a warme sonne*." See King Lear, Act iii. sc. 2, note 27.—In the next line, the folio has *nightly* instead of *nighted*. H.

[9] That is, with downcast eyes. We have repeatedly seen, that to *vail* was to *lower* or *let fall*. See The Merchant of Venice Act i sc. 1 note 3. H.

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that live must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.[10]

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: these, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term,
To do obsequious sorrow.[11] But to persever

[10] Here observe Hamlet's delicacy to his mother, and how the suppression prepares him for the overflow in the next speech, in which his character is more developed by bringing forward his aversion to externals, and which betrays his habit of brooding over the world within him, coupled with a prodigality of beautiful words, which are the half-embodyings of thought, and are more than thought, and have an outness, a reality *sui generis*, and yet retain their correspondence and shadowy affinity to the images and movements within. Note, also, Hamlet's silence to the long speech of the King, which follows, and his respectful, but general, answer to his mother.—COLERIDGE. H.

[11] The Poet sometimes uses *obsequious* as having the sense of *obsequies*. So in his 31st Sonnet:

In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
It shows a will most incorrect to Heaven;[12]
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what, we know, must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to Heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe,[13] and think of us
As of a father; for, let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And, with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart[14] toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

"How many a holy and *obsequious* tear
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,
As interest of the dead!" H.

[12] *Incorrect* is here used, apparently, in the sense of *incorrigible*. H.

[13] *Unprevailing* was used in the sense of *unavailing* as late as Dryden's time.

[14] That is, *dispense, bestow.*

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark. — Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse[15] the heaven shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but* HAMLET.

Ham. O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew![16]
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.[17] That it should come to this!
But two months dead! — nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr:[18] so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,

[15] A *rouse* was a deep draught to one's health, wherein it was the custom to empty the cup or goblet. Its meaning, and probably its origin, was the same as *carouse*, still in use. H

[16] To *resolve* had anciently the same meaning as to *dissolve*. "To thaw or *resolve* that which is frozen; *regelo*. — The snow is *resolved* and melted. To till the ground, and *resolve* it into dust." — COOPER.

[17] That is, *absolutely, solely, wholly. Mere*, Lat.

[18] *Hyperion*, or Apollo, always represented as a model of beauty. — *Beteem* is *permit* or *suffer*. The word, being uncommon was changed to *permitted* by Rowe, and to *let e en* by Theobald See A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act i sc. 1, note 5

As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on't;—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why, she, even she,—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,[19]
Would have mourn'd longer,—married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules: within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married.—O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue![20]

[19] Discourse of reason, in old philosophical language, is *rational* discourse, or *discursive* reason; the faculty of pursuing a train of thought, or of passing from thought to thought in the way of inference or conclusion. Readers of Milton will remember the fine lines in Paradise Lost, Book v.:

"Whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive or intuitive: discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, in kind the same." H

[20] This *tædium vitæ* is a common oppression on minds cast in the Hamlet mould, and is caused by disproportionate mental exertion, which necessitates exhaustion of bodily feeling. Where there is a just coincidence of external and internal action, pleasure is always the result; but where the former is deficient, and the mind's appetency of the ideal is unchecked, realities will seem cold and unmoving. In such cases, passion combines itself with the indefinite alone. In this mood of his mind, the relation of the appearance of his father's spirit in arms is made all at once to Hamlet:—it is—Horatio's speech, in particular—a perfect model of the true style of dramatic narrative; the purest poetry, and ye

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:
Horatio, — or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you.[21]
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? —
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord, —

Ham. I am very glad to see you. — Good even, sir.[22] —
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

in the most natural language, equally remote from the ink-horn and the plough. — COLERIDGE. H.

[21] As if he had said, — No, you are not my poor servant: we are *friends;* that is the style I will exchange with you. Kemble gave the true sense by laying the emphasis thus: "Sir, my good *friend;* I'll change *that* name with you." H.

[22] The words, *Good even, sir,* are evidently addressed to Bernardo, whom Hamlet has not before known; but as he now meets him in company with old acquaintances, like a true gentleman, as he is, he gives him a salutatiou of kindness. Some editors have changed *even* to *morning,* because Marcellus has said before of Hamlet, — "I this *morning* know where we shall find him." It needs but be remembered that *good even* was the common salutation after noon. — "What *make* you?" in the preceding speech is the old language for, "What *do* you?" H.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.
Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats[23]
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven,[24]
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!—
My father,—methinks, I see my father.
Hor. O! where, my lord?
Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.
Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,[25]
I shall not look upon his like again.
Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight
Ham. Saw who?[26]
Hor. My lord, the king your father.
Ham. The king my father?
Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

[23] Scott, in The Bride of Lammermoor, has made the readers of romance familiar with the old custom of "funeral bak'd meats," which was kept up in Scotland till a recent period. H.

[24] Caldecott has shown that in Shakespeare's time *dearest* was applied to any person or thing that excites the liveliest interest whether of love or hate. See Twelfth Night, Act v. sc. 1, note 3. H.

[25] Some would read this as if it were pointed thus: "He was a man: take him for all in all," &c.; laying marked stress on *man*, as if it were meant to intimate a correction of Horatio's "goodly *king*." There is, we suspect, no likelihood that the Poet had any such thought, as there is no reason why he should have had. H.

[26] In colloquial language, it was common, as indeed it still is, thus to use the nominative where strict grammar would require the objective. Modern editions embellish the two words with various pointing; as thus: "Saw! who?" or thus: "Saw? who?" H

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,[27]
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father
Arm'd at all points, exactly, cap-à-pé,[28]
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,[29]
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Hor. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;

[27] So the quarto of 1603; the other old copies have *wast* and *waste* instead of *vast*. Modern editions have differed whether it should be *waste* or *waist*, the latter meaning *middle*. We have no doubt that *vast* is the right word. Of course it means *void* or *vacancy*. See The Tempest, Act i. sc. 2, note 32; also, The Winter's Tale, Act i. sc. 1, note 1; and Pericles, Act iii. sc. 1 note 1. H.

[28] So the folio; the first quarto, "Armed *to point*;" the other quartos, "Armed *at point*." H

[29] So all the quartos; the folio has *bestill'd* instead of *distill'd*. Of course to *distill* is to fall in drops, to melt; so that *distill'd* is a very natural and fit expression for the cold sweat caused by intense fear. Mr. Collier finds *bechill'd* in his famous second folio, and is greatly delighted with it, as usual. The idea of human bodies being *chilled* or *frozen* to a *jelly* is rather queer. H

But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.[30]

Ham. 'Tis very strange

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then, saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord! he wore his beaver up.[31]

Ham. What! look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

[30] It is a most inimitable circumstance in Shakespeare so to have managed this popular idea, as to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock. Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his ghost tamely to vanish, without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt: to say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspense occasioned by this preparation to speak, and to impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected if nothing had been promised. — T. WARTON.

[31] That part of the helmet which may be lifted up.

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night:
Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;[32]
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewell.—
[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET.
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
[*Exit.*

[32] The quarto of 1603 reads *tenible*. The other quartos *tenable* The folio of 1623 *treble*.

SCENE III. A Room in Polonius' House.

Enter Laertes *and* Ophelia.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;[1]
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews,[2] and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now;
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch[3]
The virtue of his will: but you must fear;
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:[4]

[1] This is the reading of the quartos. The folio omits *perfume and*. It is plain that *perfume* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet, not lasting*. "The *suppliance* of a minute" should seem to mean *supplying* or enduring only that short space of time; as transitory and evanescent. The simile is eminently beautiful.

[2] That is, sinews and muscular strength. See the Second Part of King Henry IV., Act iii. sc. 2, note 12.

[3] *Cautel* is cautious circumspection, subtlety, or deceit. Minsheu explains it, "a crafty way to deceive." See Coriolanus, Act v. sc. 1, note 3. — *Besmirch* is *besmear*, or *sully*.

[4] This line is found only in the folio. — "This scene," says Coleridge, "must be regarded as one of Shakespeare's lyric

He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of the whole state;[5]
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head. Then, if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place[6]
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then, weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,[7]
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,

movements in the play, and the skill with which it is interwoven with the dramatic parts is peculiarly an excellence with our Poet. *You experience the sensation of a pause, without the sense of a stop.* You will observe, in Ophelia's short and general answer to the long speech of Laertes, the natural carelessness of innocence, which cannot think such a code of cautions and prudences necessary to its own preservation." H.

[5] Thus the quartos; the folio has *sanctity* instead of *safety*, supposing the metre defective. But *safety* is used as a trisyllable by Spenser and others Thus Hall in his first Satire:

"Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea,
Though Thetis self should swear her *safety*."

[6] The folio has "*peculiar sect* and *force*" instead of "*particular act* and *place*." H

[7] If with too *credulous* ear you *listen to* his songs.

Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary, then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read.[8]

Laer. O! fear me not
I stay too long;—but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes? aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with you;
[*Laying his Hand on* LAERTES' *Head.*
And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character.[9] Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:[10]

[8] That is, *regards* not his own *lesson*. *Read* was often thus used as a substantive, for the thing read. H.

[9] That is, mark, imprint, strongly infix.

[10] *Vulgar* is here used in its old sense of *common*.—In the second line below, divers modern editions have *hooks* instead of *hoops*, the reading of all the old copies It is not easy to see what is gained by the unauthorized change. H.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm [11] with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear 't, that th' opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure,[12] but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous, chief in that.[13]
Neither a borrower nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all,—to thine ownself be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee![14]

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you: go; your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

[11] "Do not *blunt* thy feeling by taking every new acquaintance by the hand, or by admitting him to the intimacy of a friend."

[12] *Censure* was continually used for *opinion*. H.

[13] The old copies read, "Are *of a* most select," &c., to the destruction of both measure and sense. H.

[14] "To *season*, for to *infuse*," says Warburton. "It is more than to infuse, it is to infix in such a manner that it may never wear out," says Johnson. But hear one of the Poet's contemporaries: "*To season*, to *temper* wisely, to make more pleasant and acceptable." — Baret. This is the sense required, and is a better commentary than the *conjectures* of the learned critics.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit* LAERTES.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus) you'll tender me a fool.[15]

[15] Instead of *Wronging*, the folio has *Roaming;* an evident roaming from sense. Mr. Collier some years ago conjectured *running* to be the right word, and has since found *running* in his second folio; a coincidence that may be read running. The quartos have *Wrong*, which has been changed rightly, we doubt not, to *Wronging*. It should be noted that *thus* refers to what goes before, not what follows; as if he had said, "and so wrong it," or, "thereby

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it: go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.[16]

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks.[17] I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, — extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making, —
You must not take for fire. From this time, daughter,[18]
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley.[19] For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young;
And with a larger tether may he walk,[20]
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,

doing it wrong." Of course he is comparing the phrase to a poor nag, which, if put to too hard a strain, will be *wind-broken*. H.

[16] The folio gives this line thus: "With all the vows of heaven." H.

[17] This was a proverbial phrase. There is a collection of epigrams under that title: the woodcock being accounted a witless bird, from a vulgar notion that it had no brains. "Springes to catch woodcocks" means "arts to entrap simplicity."

[18] *Daughter* is found only in the folio, which misprints *for* instead of *from*. *Daughter* helps both the measure and the sense; and as *fire* was then going out of use as a dissyllable, we have no doubt the Poet supplied the word. H.

[19] "Be more difficult of access, and let the *suits to you* for that purpose be of higher respect, than a command to parley."

[20] That is, with a *longer line*; a horse, fastened by a string to a stake, is *tethered*.

But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,[21]
The better to beguile. This is for all, —
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.[22]

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV. The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.[1]

[21] The old copies have *bonds* instead of *bawds*. Theobald conjectured the latter to be the right word. The use of *brokers*, which formerly meant the same as *bawd* or *pander*, favours the change. It is not easy to see what *bonds* can have to do with the passage. See Troilus and Cressida, Act v. sc. 11, note 3. H.

[22] I do not believe that in this or any other of the foregoing speeches of Polonius, Shakespeare meant to bring out the senility or weakness of that personage's mind. In the great ever-recurring dangers and duties of life, where to distinguish the fit objects for the application of the maxims collected by the experience of a long life, requires no fineness of tact, as in the admonitions to his son and daughter, Polonius is uniformly made respectable. It is to Hamlet that Polonius is, and is meant to be, contemptible, because, in inwardness and uncontrollable activity of movement, Hamlet's mind is the logical contrary to that of Polonius; and besides, Hamlet dislikes the man as false to his true allegiance in the matter of the succession to the crown. — COLERIDGE. H.

[1] *Eager* was used in the sense of the French *aigre*, sharp, biting. — "The unimportant conversation," says Coleridge, "with which this scene opens, is a proof of Shakespeare's minute knowledge of human nature. It is a well-established fact, that on the brink of any serious enterprise, or event of moment, men almost invariably endeavour to elude the pressure of their own thoughts by turning aside to trivial objects and familiar circumstances. Thus the dialogue on the platform begins with remarks on the coldness

Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: it then draws near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A Flourish of Trumpets, and Ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,[2]
Keeps wassel, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a custom?

of the air, and inquiries, obliquely connected indeed with the expected hour of visitation, but thrown out in a seeming vacuity of topics, as to the striking of the clock and so forth. The same desire to escape from the impending thought is carried on in Hamlet's account of, and moralizing on, the Danish custom of wassailing: he runs off from the particular to the universal, and, in his repugnance to personal and individual concerns, escapes, as it were, from himself in generalisations, and smothers the impatience and uneasy feelings of the moment in abstract reasoning. Besides this, another purpose is answered; — for, by thus entangling the attention of the audience in the nice distinctions and parenthetical sentences of this speech of Hamlet, Shakespeare takes them completely by surprise on the appearance of the Ghost, which comes upon them in all the suddenness of its visionary character. Indeed, no modern writer would have dared, like Shakespeare, to have preceded this last visitation by two distinct appearances; or could have contrived that the third should rise upon the former two in impressiveness and solemnity of interest." H.

[2] To *wake* is to *hold a late revel* or *debauch*. — *Rouse* is the same as *carouse*. See sc. 2, note 15. — *Wassel* originally meant a drinking to one's health; from *wœs hæl*, health be to you: hence it came to be used for any festivity of the bottle and the bowl. See Love's Labour's Lost, Act v. sc. 2, note 19; and Macbeth, Act i. sc. 7, note 10.

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind — though I am native here,
And to the manner born — it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel, east and west,[3]
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards,[4] and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition;[5] and, indeed, it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin;)
By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,[6]
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners; — that these men,-
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,[7] —
Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,

[3] This and the following twenty-one lines are wanting in the folio. They had probably been omitted in representation, lest they should give offence to Anne of Denmark.

[4] *Clepe* is *call;* from the Saxon *clypian*. The Danes were indeed proverbial as drunkards, and well they might be, according to the accounts of the time. Heywood, in his Philocothonista, or The Drunkard Opened, 1635, speaking of what he calls the venosity of nations, says of the Danes, that they have made a profession thereof from antiquity, and are the first upon record "that brought their wassel bowls and elbowe deepe healthes into this land." Roger Ascham, in one of his Letters, says, "The Emperor of Germany who had his head in the glass five times as long as any of us, never drank less than a good quart at once of Rhenish wine."

[5] That is, characterize us by a swinish epithet.

[6] By *complexion* was meant the affections of the body.

[7] That is, the influence of the planet supposed to govern our birth.

As infinite as man may undergo,
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of base
Doth all the noble substance often dout,[8]
To his own scandal.[9]

Enter the Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord! it comes.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd;
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable;

[8] To *dout* is to *do out, destroy,* or *extinguish.* The word is still so used in some parts of England. As already stated, the passage is found only in the quartos, which have "dram of *eale*" for "dram of *base*," and *of a doubt* instead of *often dout. Ill* is preferred by some, and *bale* by others, as corrections of *eale;* we prefer *base* as being the proper antithesis of *noble. Doubt* is also preferred by some, as meaning to *bring into doubt,* or *throw doubt upon;* but no instance is produced of the word so used. H.

[9] In addition to all the other excellences of Hamlet's speech concerning the wassel-music, — so finely revealing the predominant idealism, the ratiocinative meditativeness of his character, — it has the advantage of giving nature and probability to the impassioned continuity of the speech instantly directed to the Ghost. The *momentum* had been given to his mental activity; the full current of the thoughts and words had set in; and the very forgetfulness, in the fervour of his argumentation, of the purpose for which he was there, aided in preventing the appearance from benumbing the mind. Consequently, it acted as a new impulse, — a sudden stroke which increased the velocity of the body already in motion, whilst it altered the direction. The co-presence of Horatio and Marcellus is most judiciously contrived; for it renders the courage of Hamlet, and his impetuous eloquence, perfectly intelligible. The knowledge — the sensation — of human auditors acts as a support and a stimulation *a tergo,* while the front of the mind, the whole consciousness of the speaker, is filled, yea, absorbed, by the apparition. Add, too, that the apparition itself has, by its previous appearances, been brought nearer to a thing of this world. This accrescence of objectivity in a ghost that yet retains all its ghostly attributes and fearful subjectivity, is truly wonderful. — COLERIDGE. M

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,[10]
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements! why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,[11]
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,[12]
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*The Ghost beckons* HAMLET.

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then, will I follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,

[10] That is, a shape to be questioned or talked with, a shape inviting conversation. Such was the more common meaning of *questionable* in the Poet's time. H.

[11] So the folio; all the quartos have *interr'd* instead of *in-urn'd*. H.

[12] It appears from Olaus Wormius that it was the custom to burv the Danish kings in their armour.

Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again:—I'll follow it.
Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles[13] o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,[14]
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.
Ham. It waves me still.—Go on, I'll follow thee.
Mar. You shall not go, my lord.
Ham. Hold off your hands.
Hor. Be rul'd: you shall not go.
Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.—
[*Ghost beckons.*
Still am I call'd.—Unhand me, gentlemen;—
[*Breaking from them.*

[13] That is, overhangs his base. Thus in Sidney's Arcadia: "Hills lift up their *beetle* brows, as if they would overlooke the pleasantnesse of their under prospect." The verb *to beetle* is apparently of Shakespeare's creation.

[14] To "deprive your *sovereignty* of reason," signifies to take from you the *command* of reason. We have similar instances of raising the idea of virtues or qualities by giving them rank, in Banquo's "*royalty* of nature;" and even in this play we have "*nobility* of love," and "*dignity* of love." *Deprive* was often thus used in the sense of *take away*. — *Toys*, second line after, means *whims*. — The last four lines of this speech are not in the folio.

By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:[15]—
I say, away!—Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and* HAMLET

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after.—To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.[16]

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Enter the Ghost and HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

[15] To *let*, in old language, is to *hinder*, or *prevent*.

[16] Marcellus answers Horatio's question, "To what issue will this come?" and Horatio also answers it himself with pious resignation, "Heaven will direct it."

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,[1]
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away.[2] But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:[3]
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. — List, list, O list! —
If thou didst ever thy dear father love, —

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know't; that I, with wings as swift

[1] The spirit being supposed to feel the same desires and appetites as when clothed in the flesh, the pains and punishments promised by the ancient moral teachers are often of a sensual nature Chaucer in the Persones Tale says, "The misese of hell shall be *in defaute of mete and drinke*." So, too, in The Wyll of the Devyll: "Thou shalt lye in frost and fire, with sicknes and *hunger*." — Heath proposed "*lasting* fires," and such is the change in Collier's second folio. H.

[2] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into "the punytion of the saulis in purgatory." "It is a nedeful thyng to suffer paines and torment; — sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uther sum: thus the mony vices contrakkit in the corpis *be done away and purgit*."

[3] *Fretful* is the reading of the folio; the quartos read *fearful*.

As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,[4]
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetic soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,
(O, wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O, Hamlet! what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,

[4] So reads the folio; the quartos all have *roots* instead of *rots* Most editors prefer *roots;* but, surely, *rots* is much more consonant to the sense of the passage. To speak of a thing as rotting *itself* is not indeed common; but we have it in Antony and Cleopatra, thus:

> "Like a vagabond flag upon the stream,
> Go to and back, lackeying the varying tide,
> To *rot itself* with motion." K.

And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air:
Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,[5]
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a phial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment;[6] whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,[7]
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,[8]
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,

[5] So the folio and the quarto of 1603; the other quartos, "*of* the afternoon." — *Secure*, in the next line, is a Latinism, *securus quiet, unguarded.* H.

[6] *Hebenon* is probably derived from *henbane*, the oil of which, according to Pliny, dropped into the ears, disturbs the brain. and there is sufficient evidence that it was held poisonous. So in Anton's Satires, 1606: "The *poison'd henbane*, whose cold juice doth kill." And Drayton, in his Barons' Wars: "The *poisoning henbane* and the mandrake dread." It is, however, possible that poisonous qualities may have been ascribed to *ebony;* called *ebene*, and *ebeno*, by old English writers. So Marlow, in his Jew of Malta, speaking of noxious things: "The blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane, the juyce of *hebon*, and cocytus breath." The French word *hebenin*, which would be applied to any thing made from ebony, comes indeed very close to the *hebenon* of Shakespeare.

[7] In the preceding scene, note 1, we have had *eager* in the sense of *sharp, biting*. Baret explains, "*Eger*, sower, *sharp, acidus, aigre*." "*Eager* droppings" are drops of *acid.* H.

[8] So all the quartos; the folio has *bak'd* instead of *bark'd;* a misprint, probably, but preferred by some editors. — *Instant* seems to be here used in its Latin sense; *pressing, urgent, harassing.* H.

Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd;[9]
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd;[10]
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible![1]

Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to Heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:[12]
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*

[9] The first quarto has *depriv'd*, and Mr. Collier's second folio, *despoil'd*. *Despatch'd* is better than either, because to the sense of *deprivation* it adds that of *suddenness*. See King Richard II. Act v. sc. 4, note 2. H.

[10] *Unhousel'd* is without having received the sacrament. Thus in Hormanni Vulgaria, 1519: "He is departed without shryfte and *housyll*." *Disappointed* is *unappointed*, *unprepared*. A man well-furnished for an enterprise is said to be well-*appointed*. *Unanel'd* is without extreme unction. Thus in Cavendish's Life of Wolsey: 'Then we began to put him in mind of Christ's passion; and sent for the abbot of the place to *anneal* him."

[1] The old copies print this line as part of the Ghost's speech. Johnson thought it should be transferred to Hamlet, and Garrick delivered it as belonging to the Prince, according to the tradition of the stage. These authorities and the example of Mr. Verplanck have determined us to the change. H.

[12] *Uneffectual* is shining without *heat*. In the next line, the quartos, instead of *Hamlet*, have *adieu* repeated the third time. — The paper of Blackwood, quoted in our Introduction, has the following excellent remarks on the Ghost: "The effect at first produced by the apparition is ever afterwards wonderfully sustained I do not merely allude to the touches of realization which, in the poetry of the scenes, pass away from no memory; — such as

Ham. O, all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell? — O fie! — Hold, hold, my heart!
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up! — Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.[13] Remember thee?
Yea, from the tables of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;[14]
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by Heaven.
O, most pernicious woman!
O, villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, — meet it is, I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;[15]

'The star,' — 'Where now it burns,' — 'The sepulchre,' — 'The complete steel,' — 'The glimpses of the moon,' — 'Making night hideous,' — 'Look, how pale he glares,' — and other wild expressions, that are like fastenings by which the mind clings to its terror. I rather allude to the whole conduct of the Ghost. We ever behold in it a troubled spirit leaving its place of suffering to revisit the life it had left, to direct and command a retribution that must be accomplished. He speaks of the pain to which he is gone, but that fades away in the purpose of his mission. 'Pity me not:' He bids Hamlet revenge, though there is not the passion of revenge in his discourse. The penal fires have purified the grosser man. The spectre utters but a moral declaration of guilt, and swears its living son to the fulfilment of a righteous vengeance."

H.

[13] That is, in this *head* confused with thought.

[14] "*Tables* or books, or registers for memorie of things," were then used by all ranks, and contained prepared leaves from which what was written with a silver style could easily be effaced.

[15] I remember nothing equal to this burst, unless it be the first speech of Prometheus, in the Greek drama, after the *exit* of Vulcan and the two Afrites. But Shakespeare alone could have pro-

At least, I am sure it may be so in Denmark:

[*Writing.*

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is, "Adieu, adieu! remember me."
I have sworn't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord!

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!

Mar. [*Within.*] So be it!

Hor. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.[16]

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord!

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No; you'll reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by Heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?—
But you'll be secret?

Hor. Mar. Ay, by Heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.

duced the vow of Hamlet to make his memory a blank of all maxims and generalized truths that "observation had copied there,"—followed immediately by the speaker noting down the generalized fact, "That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain."—COLERIDGE. H.

[16] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air when they would have him come down to them.—The quartos assign some of these speeches differently, and have *boy* instead of *bird*. We follow the folio here. H.

Hor. 'There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are i'the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands, and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you,—
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is;—and, for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.[17]

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I'm sorry they offend you, heartily; yes, 'Faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by St. Patrick,[18] but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith, my lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

[17] The words, *Look you,* are found only in the folio. H.

[18] Warburton has ingeniously defended Shakespeare for making the Danish prince swear by *St. Patrick,* by observing that the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?

Come on, — you hear this fellow in the cellarage, — Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen, Swear by my sword.[19]

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique!* then, we'll shift our ground. —

Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.[20]

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i'the earth so fast?
A worthy pioneer! — Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O, day and night! but this is wondrous strange.

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.[21]

[19] The custom of swearing by the sword, or rather by the cross at the upper end of it, is very ancient. The name of Jesus was not unfrequently inscribed on the handle. The allusions to this custom are very numerous in our old writers.

[20] Here again we follow the folio, with which the first quarto agrees. In the other quartos, this speech reads, "Swear *by his sword;*" and the last two lines of the preceding speech are transposed. In the next line, the folio has *ground* instead of *earth.* H.

[21] So read all the quartos; the folio, "*our* philosophy." The

But come ; —
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself ; —
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on ; —
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, "Well, well, we know ;" — or, "We could, an
if we would ;" — or, "If we list to speak ;" — or
"There be, an if they might ;" —
Or such ambiguous giving-out, to note
That you know aught of me : — this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you.
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit ! — So, gentle men,
With all my love I do commend me to you :
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, t' express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together ;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint ; — O, cursed spite !
That ever I was born to set it right.
Nay, come ; let's go together.[22] [*Exeunt*

passage has had so long a lease of familiarity, as it stands in the text, that it seems best not to change it. Besides, *your* gives a nice characteristic shade of meaning that is lost in *our*. Of course it is not *Horatio's* philosophy, but your *philosophy*, that Hamlet is speaking of. H.

[22] This part of the scene after Hamlet's interview with the Ghost has been charged with an improbable eccentricity. But the truth is, that after the mind has been stretched beyond its usual pitch and tone, it must either sink into exhaustion and inanity, or seek relief by change. It is thus well known, that persons conversant in deeds of cruelty contrive to escape from conscience by con-

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Room in POLONIUS' House.

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers[1] are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,

necting something of the ludicrous with them, and by inventing grotesque terms and a certain technical phraseology to disguise the horror of their practices. Indeed, paradoxical as it may appear, the terrible by a law of the human mind always touches on the verge of the ludicrous. Both arise from the perception of something out of the common order of things, — something, in fact, out of its place; and if from this we can abstract the danger, the uncommonness alone will remain, and the sense of the ridiculous be excited. The close alliance of these opposites — they are not contraries — appears from the circumstance, that laughter is equally the expression of extreme anguish and horror as of joy: as there are tears of sorrow and tears of joy, so there is a laugh of terror and a laugh of merriment. These complex causes will naturally have produced in Hamlet the disposition to escape from his own feelings of the overwhelming and supernatural by a wild transition to the ludicrous, — a sort of cunning bravado, bordering on the flights of delirium. — COLERIDGE. H.

[1] That is, *Danes*. Warner, in his Albion's England, calls Denmark *Danske*.

What company, at what expense; and, finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, — "I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him:" — do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. "And, in part, him; but," you may say "not well:
But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so;" — and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him, take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord?

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing,[2] swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing: — you may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind;

[2] "The cunning of *fencers* is now applied to *quarrelling*; they thinke themselves no men, if, for stirring of a straw, they prove not their valure uppon some bodies fleshe." — *Gosson's Schole of Abuse*, 1579.

A savageness[3] in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord, —

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord, I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift,
And I believe it is a fetch of warrant:[4]
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence:
"Good sir," or so; or "friend," or "gentleman,"—
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country; —

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this, — he does — What was I about to say? — By the mass, I was about to say something: — Where did I leave?

Rey. At, closes in the consequence,
As "friend or so" and "gentleman."[5]

Pol. At, closes in the consequence, — ay, marry;
He closes thus: "I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday," or "t'other day,"
Or then, or then; with such, or such; "and, as you say,

[3] A wildness of untamed blood, such as youth is generally assailed by.

[4] "A fetch of warrant" seems to mean an allowable stratagem or practice. — The quartos have "fetch of *wit*." H.

[5] This line is in the folio only. In the third line before, the folio omits "By the mass," probably on account of the statute against profanity; and, in the second line after, inserts *with you* between *closes* and *thus*. H.

There was he gaming; there o'ertook in 's rouse;
There falling out at tennis:" or, perchance,
"I saw him enter such a house of sale,
Videlicit, a brothel," or so forth.—
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with assays of bias,[6]
By indirections find directions out:
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord.

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.[7]

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell!—How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

Oph. Alas, my lord! I have been so affrighted![8]

Pol. With what, in the name of God?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,

[6] That is, by *tortuous devices* and *side essays*. "To *assay* or rather *essay*, of the French word *essayer*, *tentare*," says Baret

[7] That is, in your own person; add your own observations of his conduct to these inquiries respecting him.

[8] So the folio; the quartos have, "O, my lord, my lord!" instead of, "Alas, my lord!" Also, in the next line but one, the quartos have *closet* instead of *chamber*. — Here, as in divers other places, the folio substitutes *Heaven* for *God*; doubtless on account of the statute mentioned in note 5 H.

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;[9]
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, — a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down, —
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,[10]
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o'doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love;
Whose violent property fordoes itself,[11]
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry, —
What! have you given him any hard words of late?

[9] Hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters or gyves round the ankles.

[10] That is, his *breast*. "The *bulke* or *breast* of a man Thorax la poitrine." — BARET.

[11] To *fordo* and to *undo* were synonymous.

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment,
I had not quoted him:[12] I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
It seems it is as proper to our age[13]
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.[14]

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. A Room in the Castle.

Enter the King, the Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and Attendants.*

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern!

[12] To quote is to *note*, to *mark*, or *observe*.

[13] The folio substitutes *It seems* for *By Heaven*, of the quartos. Coleridge here makes the following remark: "In this admirable scene, Polonius, who is throughout the skeleton of his own former skill in state-craft, hunts the trail of policy at a dead scent, supplied by the weak fever-smell in his own nostrils." H

[14] "This must be made known to the king, for the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the queen, than the uttering or revealing it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet." Johnson, whose explanation this is, attributes the obscurity to the Poet's "*affectation* of concluding the scene with a couplet." There would surely have been more affectation in deviating from the universally established custom — The quartos add *Come*, after the closing couplet

Moreover that we much did long to see you,[1]
The need we had to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since nor th' exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from th' understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of:[2] I entreat you both,
That,—being of so young days brought up with him
And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,—
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry[3] and good will,
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,[4]
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties

[1] We do not recollect another instance of *moreover that* used in this way. Of course, the sense is the same as *besides that*, or "over and above the fact that," &c. H.

[2] So the quartos; the folio, "*deem* of." In the next line but one, the quartos have *haviour* instead of *humour*. H.

[3] *Gentry* for *gentle courtesy*. — The last line but one, in the preceding speech, is not in the folio. H.

[4] *Supply* and *profit* is *aid* and *advantage*.

Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern:

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too-much-changed son. — Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt* Ros. Guil. *and some Attendants.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Th' ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king;
And I do think (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O! speak of that; that do I long to hear

Pol. Give, first, admittance to th' ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in. — [*Exit* POLONIUS.
He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.[5]

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him. — Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Vol. Most fair return of greetings and desires
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat griev'd, —
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand,[6] — sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he in brief obeys,
Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give th' assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;[7]
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:

[5] So the folio; the quartos have *hasty* instead of *o'erhasty*. H.

[6] To *bear in hand* is to lead along by assurances or expectations. See Measure for Measure, Act i. sc 5, note 6. H.

[7] That is, the king gave his nephew a *feud* or *fee* in land of that annual value.

With an intreaty, herein further shown,
[*Giving a Paper*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise;
On such regards of safety and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business:
Meantime, we thank you for your well-took labour
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home!
[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate [8]
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect defective comes by cause:

[8] That is, to *inquire*; another Latinism.

Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend:
I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather and surmise.
"To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,"[9] —
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase; but you shall hear. — Thus:
"In her excellent white bosom, these," &c.[10]

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful. —

[*Reads.*] Doubt thou the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

O, dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers: I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best! believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET.

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me;
And, more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

[9] *Beautified* is not uncommon in dedications and encomiastic verses of the Poet's age.

[10] The word *these* was usually added at the end of the superscription of letters. See The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act iii sc. 1, note 10.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think, —
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb;[11]
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? no, I went round[12] to work,
And my young mistress thus did I bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;[13]
This must not be:" and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we wail for.[14]

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time (I'd fain know that)
That I have positively said, "'Tis so,"
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

[11] That is, if I had given my heart a *hint* to be mute about their passion. "Conniventia, a *winking at;* a sufferance; *a feigning not to see or know.*" The quartos have *working* instead of *winking*.

[12] Plainly, roundly, without reserve.

[13] That is, not within thy *destiny;* alluding to the supposed influence of the stars on the fortune of life. H

[14] So the folio; the quartos have *mourn* instead of *wail*. H

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
[*Pointing to his Head and Shoulder*
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.
King. How may we try it further?
Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together,
Here in the lobby.
Queen. So he does, indeed.
Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him
Be you and I behind an arras then:
Mark the encounter; if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.
King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, *reading.*

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.
Pol. Away! I do beseech you, both away.
I'll board[15] him presently: — O! give me leave. —
[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*
How does my good lord Hamlet?
Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy.
Pol. Do you know me, my lord?
Ham. Excellent well; you're a fishmonger.[16]
Pol. Not I, my lord.
Ham. Then, I would you were so honest a man.
Pol. Honest, my lord?

[15] That is, *accost, address* him. So in Twelfth Night, Act i. sc. 3: "*Accost* is, front her, *board* her, woo her, assail her." H.

[16] "That is," says Coleridge, "you are sent to fish out this secret. This is Hamlet's own meaning." H.

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,[17]—Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i'the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive:[18]—friend, look to't.

[17] Such is the reading of all the old copies. Warburton changed it to, "being a *god*, kissing carrion," and supported the change with a long comment which, in the opinion of Dr. Johnson, "almost sets the critic on a level with the author!" The critic remarks that Shakespeare "had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but what they *think*;" and he regards the passage as intended to "vindicate the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world." He sums up his argument thus: "If the effect follows the thing operated upon, *carrion*, and not the thing operating, a *God*, why need we wonder that, the supreme Cause of all things diffusing blessings on man, who is a dead carrion, he, instead of a proper return, should breed corruption and vices?" The comment is certainly most ingenious; too much so indeed, as it looks as if the critic were attributing his own thoughts to the Poet. Shakespeare, it is true, elsewhere calls the sun "common-kissing Titan;" but if, in this case, *good* had been a misprint for *god*, it would most likely have begun with a capital, *Good*. Either way, the passage is very obscure; Coleridge thinks it is purposely so. We are unable to decide whether *good kissing* should mean good to kiss, or good at kissing, that is, at returning a kiss. Mr. Verplanck explains it thus: "If even a dead dog can be kissed by the sun, how much more is youthful beauty in danger of corruption, unless it seek the shade." This is, on the whole, the best we have seen, but we must add Coleridge's explanation: "Why, fool as he is, he is some degrees in rank above a dead dog's carcass; and if the sun can raise life out of a dead dog, why may not good fortune, that favours fools, have raised a lovely girl out of this dead-alive old fool?" In elucidation of the passage, Malone aptly quotes the following from the play of King Edward III., 1596:

> "The freshest *summer's day* doth soonest *taint*
> The loathed *carrion* that it seems to *kiss*."

[18] So the folio; *not* is wanting in the quartos. The sense of

Pol. [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter: — yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone: and, truly in my youth I suffer'd much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again. — What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between whom?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have gray beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, should be as old as I am,[1] if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there's method in't. — Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o'the air. — How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My hon

the passage is much the same either way, and needs no explanation. Of course Hamlet's language is a part of his "antic disposition," and meant to favour the notion of his being insane. H.

[1] So the folio; the quartos have *shall grow* instead of *should be.* H.

ourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.[20]

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. [*To* POLONIUS.] God save you, sir. [*Exit* POLONIUS.

Guil. My honour'd lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!—

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true! she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

[20] Such is the folio reading; the quartos give the latter part of the speech thus: "I will leave him and my daughter.—My lord, I will take my leave of you."—In the next speech, the folio has, "except my life, my life." Coleridge says of the quarto reading —"This repetition strikes me as most admirable." H.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near. But your news s not true. Let me question more in particular: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o'the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly; and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretch'd heroes the beggars' shadows.[21] Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.[22]

[21] If ambition is such an unsubstantial thing, then are our beggars (who at least can dream of greatness) the only things of substance, and monarchs and heroes, though appearing to fill such mighty space with their ambition, but the shadows of the beggars' dreams. — JOHNSON.

[22] *Fay* is merely a diminutive of *faith*. See The Taming of the Shrew, Induction, sc. 2, note 6. H.

Ros. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.[23] But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a half-penny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. [*To* GUILDEN.] What say you?

Ham. [*Aside.*] Nay, then I have an eye of you[24] —If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

[23] The foregoing part of the scene, beginning with, "Let me question more in particular," is found only in the folio.—"What *make* you," in the next line, is, "What *do* you." The usage was common. H.

[24] That is, I will watch you sharply; *of* for *on*, a common usage. H.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather.[25] I have of late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament,[26] this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appeareth nothing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there is no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh, then, when I said, "Man delights not me?"

[25] That is, not *change* a feather; *moult* being an old word for *change;* applied especially to birds when putting on a new suit of clothes. So in Bacon's Naturall Historie: "Some birds there be that upon their *moulting* do turn colour; as robin-redbreasts, after their *moulting*, grow red again by degrees." — The whole passage seems to mean, "my anticipation shall prevent your discovering to me the purpose of your visit, and so your promise of secrecy will be perfectly kept." H.

[26] So the quartos; the folio omits *firmament*, and so of course turns *o'erhanging* into a substantive. It may well be thought, that by the omission the language becomes more Shakespearian, without any loss of eloquence. But the passage, as it stands, is so much a household word, that it seems best not to change it. — The folio also has, "*appears no other thing* to me *than*," instead of, "*appeareth nothing* to me *but*." H.

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you:[27] we coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o'the sere;[28] and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. — What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.[29]

[27] "*Lenten* entertainment" is entertainment for the season of *Lent*, when players were not allowed to perform in public. See Twelfth Night, Act i. sc. 5, note 1. — To *cote* is to *pass alongside*, to *pass by*, or *overtake*. So in The Return from Parnassus: "Marry, presently *coted* and outstript them." H.

[28] The meaning appears to be, the clown shall make even those laugh whose lungs are tickled with a dry cough, or huskiness; by his merriment shall convert even their coughing into laughter. The same expression occurs in Howard's Defensative against the Poyson of supposed Prophecies, 1620: "Discovering the moods and humours of the vulgar sort to be so loose and *tickle of the seare*." The words are found only in the folio. The first quarto has, "make *them* laugh that are tickled *in the lungs*."

[29] Referring, no doubt, to the order of the Privy Council, June, 1600, quoted in our Introduction to Twelfth Night, Vol i., page 337. By this order, the players were *inhibited* from acting in or near the city during the season of Lent, besides being very much restricted at all other seasons, and hence "chances it they travel," or *stroll* into the country. — As the matter involves some curious points as to the time or times when this play was written, it may be well to add the corresponding passage from the quarto of 1603;

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so follow'd?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aiery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question,[30] and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them,) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What! are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted?[31] Will they pursue

"*Ham.* Players? what players be they?

"*Ros.* My lord, the tragedians of the city; those that you took delight to see so often.

"*Ham.* How comes it that they travel? Do they grow restie?

"*Guil.* No, my lord; their reputation holds as it was wont.

"*Ham.* How then?

"*Guil.* I 'faith, my lord, novelty carries it away; for the principal public audience that came to them are turned to private plays, and the humour of children." H.

[30] *Aiery*, from *eyren*, eggs, properly means a *brood*, but sometimes a *nest*. See King Richard III., Act i. sc. 3, note 20. — *Eyas* is a name for an unfledged hawk. See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iii. sc. 3, note 2. — "Top of question" probably means, top of their *voice; question* being often used for *speech*. — The allusion is to the children of St. Paul's and of the Revels, whose performing of plays was much in fashion at the time this play was written. From an early date, the choir-boys of St. Paul's, Westminster, Windsor, and the Chapel Royal, were engaged in such performances, and sometimes played at Court. The complaint here is, that these juveniles so abuse "the common stages," that is, the theatres, as to deter many from visiting them. In Jack Drum's Entertainment, 1601, one of the speakers says they were heard "with much applause;" and another speaks thus: "I sawe the children of Powles last night, and, troth, they pleas'd me prettie, prettie well: the apes in time will do it handsomely." H.

[31] *Escoted* is *paid;* from the French *escot*, a *shot* or *reckoning*. — *Quality* is *profession* or *calling;* often so used. — "No longer than they can sing," means, no longer than they keep the voices of boys H.

the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre[32] them on to controversy: there was, for a while no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O! there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.[33]

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those, that would make mowes[34] at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of Trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come, then; the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony; let me comply

[32] That is, set them on; a phrase borrowed from the setting on a dog. See King John, Act iv. sc. 1, note 6.

[33] That is, carry all the world before them: there is perhaps an allusion to the *Globe* theatre, the sign of which is said to have been Hercules carrying the globe. — This speech and what precedes, beginning at, "Nay, their endeavour keeps," &c., are found only in the folio. H.

[34] So the folio; the quartos, *mouths;* all but the first, which has *mops* and *moes*. H.

with you in this garb;[35] lest my extent to the players (which, I tell you, must show fairly outward) should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.[36]

Re-enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too,—at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

Ros. Haply, he's the second time come to them, for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o'Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you: When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

[35] That is, let me *embrace* you in this *fashion;* lest I should seem to give you a less courteous reception than I give the players, to whom I must behave with at least exterior politeness. That *comply with* was sometimes used in the sense of *embrace* appears by the following from Herrick:

"Witty Ovid, by
Whom fair Corinna sits, and doth *comply,*
With iv'ry wrists, his laureat head, and steeps
His eye in dew of kisses, while he sleeps."

[36] "To know a hawk from a handsaw," was a proverb in Shakespeare's time. *Handsaw* is merely a corruption of *hernshaw* which means a *heron.* H.

Pol. Upon my honour, —

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass, —

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,[37] scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.[38]

Ham. O, Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why —

> One fair daughter, and no more,
> The which he loved passing well.[39]

[37] The words, "tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral," are found only in the first quarto and the folio. H.

[38] "The meaning," says Collier, "probably is, that the players were good, whether at written productions or at extemporal plays, where liberty was allowed to the performers to invent the dialogue, in imitation of the Italian *commedie al improviso.*" In Elizabeth's time, it was the custom of the students in the Universities to act Latin plays; and, as Warton remarks, it may have been this that suggested the names of Seneca and Plautus to the Poet. In the next Act, Hamlet says to Polonius, — "My lord, you play'd once in the university, you say." H.

[39] These lines are from an old ballad, entitled "Jephtha, Judge of Israel." It was first printed in Percy's Reliques, having been "retrieved from utter oblivion by a lady, who wrote it down from memory, as she had formerly heard it sung by her father." A more correct copy has since been discovered, and reprinted in Evans' Old Ballads, 1810; where the first stanza runs thus:

> "I have read that many years agoe,
> When Jephtha, judge of Israel,
> Had one fair daughter and no moe,
> Whom he loved passing well;
> As by lot, God wot,
> It came to passe, most like it was,
> Great warrs there should be,
> And who should be the chiefe but he, but he."

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i'the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

As by lot, God wot,

And then, you know,

It came to pass, as most like it was,—

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgment comes.[40]

Enter Four or Five Players.

Ye're welcome, masters; welcome, all.—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanc'd[41] since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine.[42] 'Pray God,

[40] That is, probably, those who will *abridge my talk.*—"The pious *chanson*" is something to be *sung* or *chanted;* in the first quarto it is called "the *godly ballad.*"—"The first *row,*" seems to mean "the first *column.*" H.

[41] That is, fringed with a beard.

[42] A *chopine* was a kind of high shoe, worn by the Spanish and Italian ladies, and adopted at one time as a fashion by the English. Coriate describes those worn by the Venetians as some of them "half a yard high." Bulwer, in his Artificial Changeling, complains of this fashion, as a monstrous affectation, "wherein our ladies imitate the Venetian and Persian ladies." *Chapin* is the Spanish name; and Cobarruvias countenances honest Tom Coriate's account of the preposterous height to which some ladies carried them. He tells an old tale of their being invented to prevent women's gadding, being first made of *wood,* and very heavy; and that the ingenuity of the women overcame this inconvenience

your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring.[43] — Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers,[44] fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play.* What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, — but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million; 'twas caviare to the general:[45] but it was (as I receiv'd it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines[46] to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase

by substituting *cork*. Though they are mentioned under the name of *cioppini* by those who saw them in use in Venice, the dictionaries record them under the title of *zoccoli*.

[43] The old gold coin was thin and liable to crack. There was a *ring* or circle on it, within which the sovereign's head, &c.. was placed; if the crack extended beyond this ring, it was rendered uncurrent: it was therefore a simile applied to any other debased or injured object. There is some humour in applying it to *a cracked voice*.

[44] So the folio and the first quarto; the other quartos have *friendly* instead of *French*. H.

[45] *Caviare* was the pickled roes of certain fish of the sturgeon kind, called in Italy *caviale*, and much used there and in other countries. Great quantities were prepared on the river Volga formerly. As a dish of high seasoning and peculiar flavour, it was not relished by the *many*, that is, the *general*. A fantastic fellow, described in Jonson's Cynthia's Revels, is said to be learning to eat macaroni, periwinkles, French beans, and *caviare*, and pretending to like them.

[46] The force of this phrase will appear by the following from A Banquet of Jests, 1665: — "For *junkets* joci, and for *sallets* sales." "Sal. *Salte*, a pleasante and mery word, that maketh folke to laugh, and sometimes pricketh." — BARET.

that might indict the author of affectation;[47] but call'd it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly lov'd: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see;—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast,—

'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,[48]
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now his dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now he is total gules;[49] horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
To their lord's murder: Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks:—

So proceed you.

[47] So the folio; the quartos, *affection*, which was sometimes used for *affectation*.— *Indict* is *impeach* or *convict*. H.

[48] Schlegel observes, that "this speech must not be judged by itself, but in connexion with the place where it is introduced. To distinguish it as dramatic poetry in the play itself, it was necessary that it should rise above the dignified poetry of that in the same proportion that the theatrical elevation does above simple nature. Hence Shakespeare has composed the play in Hamlet altogether in sententious rhymes, full of antithesis. But this solemn and measured tone did not suit a speech in which violent emotion ought to prevail; and the Poet had no other expedient than the one of which he made use, overcharging the pathos."

[49] *Gules* is *red*, in the language of heraldry: to *trick* is to colour.— The folio has *to take* instead of *total*.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

1 *Play* Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
Th' unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i'the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,[50]
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death; anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends![51]

[50] For the meaning of *rack* see The Tempest, Act iv. sc. 1, note 16; also, 3 Henry VI., Act ii. sc. 1, note 4. H.

[51] To the remarks of Schlegel on this speech should be added those of Coleridge, as the two appear to have been a coincidence of thought, and not a borrowing either way: "This admirable substitution of the epic for the dramatic, giving such reality to the

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard. — 'Pr'ythee, say on: — He's for a jig,[52] or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. — Say on: come to Hecuba.

1 *Play.* But who, O! who had seen the mobled[53] queen —

Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 *Play.* Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum;[54] a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in th' alarm of fear caught up; —
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd

dramatic diction of Shakespeare's own dialogue, and authorized, too, by the actual style of the tragedies before his time, is well worthy of notice. The fancy, that a burlesque was intended, sinks below criticism: the lines, as epic narrative, are superb. — In the thoughts, and even in the separate parts of the diction, this description is highly poetical: in truth, taken by itself, that is its fault, that it is too poetical! — the language of lyric vehemence and epic pomp, and not of the drama. But if Shakespeare had made the diction truly dramatic, where would have been the contrast between Hamlet and the play in Hamlet?" H.

[52] *Giga*, in Italian, was a fiddle, or crowd; *gigaro*, a fiddler, or minstrel. Hence a *jig* was a ballad, or ditty, sung to the fiddle. "Frottola, a countrie *gigge*, or round, or country song or wanton verse." As the itinerant minstrels proceeded they made it a kind of farcical dialogue; and at length it came to signify a short merry interlude: "Farce, the *jigg* at the end of an enterlude, wherein some pretie knaverie is acted."

[53] Thus the first quarto; the other quartos have *a woe* instead of *O! who*. The folio agrees with the first quarto, except that it misprints *inobled* for *mobled*. — *Mobled* is hastily or carelessly dressed. To *mob* or *mab* is still used in the north of England for to dress in a slatternly manner; and Coleridge says "*mob*-cap is still a word in common use for a morning cap." H.

[54] *Bisson* is *blind*. *Bisson rheum* is therefore *blinding tears* See Coriolanus, Act ii. sc. 1, note 5; and Act iii. sc. 1, note 11.

But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamour that she made
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made milch the burning eye of heaven,[55]
And passion in the gods.

Pol. Look, whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes. — Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. — Good my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you hear? let them be well us'd; for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikin, man! much better: Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs. [*Exit, with some of the Players.*

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. — Dost thou hear me, old friend? can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't, could you not?

[55] By a hardy poetical licence this expression means, "Would have *filled with tears* the burning eye of heaven." We have Lemosus, *milch*-hearted," in Huloet's and Lyttleton's Dictionaries. It is remarkable that, in old Italian, lattuoso is used for luttuoso, in the same metaphorical manner.

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. — Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit Player.*] — My good friends [*To* Ros. *and* Guil.] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' you. — Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working, all his visage wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,[56]
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue[57] for passion,
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John a-dreams,[58] unpregnant of my cause,

[56] So the folio and first quarto; the other quartos, "or he to *her*," instead of, "or he to *Hecuba*." H.

[57] That is, the *hint* or *prompt-word*, a technical phrase among players. "A prompter," says Florio, "one who keepes the booke for the plaiers, and teacheth them, or schollers their *cue*."

[58] This John was probably distinguished as a sleepy, apathetic fellow, a sort of dreaming or droning simpleton or flunkey. The only other mention of him that has reached us, is in Armin's Nest of Ninnies, 1608: "His name is John, indeed, says the cinnick, but neither John a-nods nor *Iohn a-dreams*, yet either, as you take it." H.

And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat was made.[59] Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by th' nose? gives me the lie i'the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
'Zounds! I should take it; for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter;[60] or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless[61] villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;
That I, the son of the dear murdered,[62]
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

[59] *Defeat* was frequently used in the sense of *undo* or *take away* by our old writers. Thus Chapman in his Revenge for Honour: "That he might meantime make a sure *defeat* on our good aged father's life."

[60] Of course the meaning is, "lack gall to make me feel the bitterness of oppression." There were no need of saying this, but that Collier, on the strength of his second folio, would read *transgression*, and Singer, on the strength of nothing, *aggression*. Dyce justly pronounces the alteration "nothing less than villainous." H.

[61] *Kindless* is unnatural. See The Merchant of Venice, Act i. sc. 3, note 7.

[62] Thus the folio; some copies of the undated quarto, and the quarto of 1611, read, "the son of *a* dear *father murder'd*." The quartos of 1604 and 1605 are without father; and that of 1603 reads, "the son of my dear father." There can be no question that the reading we have adopted, besides having the most authority, is much the more beautiful and expressive, though modern editors commonly take the other. — The words, "O, vengeance!" are found only in the folio. H.

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing like a very drab,
A scullion! Fie upon't! foh!
About, my brain![63] Humph! I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;[64]
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players,
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he do blench,[65]
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil: and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this:[66] the play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

[63] "*About*, my brain," is nothing more than "*to work*, my brain." The phrase, to go *about* a thing, is still common.

[64] Several instances of the kind are collected by Thomas Heywood in his Apology for Actors.

[65] To *tent* was to *probe*, to search a wound. To *blench* is to shrink or start.

[66] "More *relative*" is more *correspondent*, more *conjunctive with the cause*; that is, more *certain*. The sense is well explained by the reading of the first quarto: "I will have *sounder proofs*." — That Hamlet was not alone in the suspicion here started, appears from Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*: "I believe that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villainy; instilling and stealing into our hearts that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander solicitous of the affairs of the world

ACT III.

SCENE I. A Room in the Castle.

Enter the King, the Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of conference,[1]
Get from him why he puts on this confusion;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him to any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way:[2] of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court;[3]

But, that those phantasms appear often, and do frequent cemeteries, charnel-houses, and churches, it is because those are the dormitories of the dead, where the devil, like an insolent champion, beholds with pride the spoils and trophies of his victory in Adam." H

[1] So the quartos; the folio, *circumstance*

[2] *Oer-raught* is *overtook.*

[3] Thus the folio; the quartos. "They are *here.*"

And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd. —
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:[4]
Her father and myself, lawful espials,[5]
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If 't be th' affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you. —
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit Queen.*

[4] That is, *meet* her, *encounter* her; *affrontare*, Ital. See The Winter's Tale, Act v. sc. 1, note 5.

[5] That is, lawful *spies*. "An *espiall* in warres, a scoutwatche a *beholder*, a viewer." — BARET. — The two words are found only in the folio.

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. — Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. — [*To* OPHE.] Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. — We are oft to blame in this, —
'Tis too much prov'd, — that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true! —
[*Aside.*] How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O, heavy burden!

Pol. I near him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt King and* POLONIUS.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question.
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them? — To die, — to sleep, —
No more; — and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, — 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, — to sleep; —
To sleep! perchance, to dream; — ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,[6]

[6] That is, the tumult and bustle of this life. It is remarkable

Must give us pause. There's the respect[7]
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd love,[8] the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who'd these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death —
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns — puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,

that under *garbuglio*, which has the same meaning in Italian as our *coil*, Florio has "a pecke of troubles;" of which Shakespeare's "sea of troubles" is only an aggrandized idea.

[7] That is, the *consideration*. This is Shakespeare's most usual sense of the word.

[8] *Time*, for *the time*, is a very usual expression with our old writers. In Cardanus Comfort, by Thomas Bedingfield, 1599, is a description of the miseries of life strongly resembling that in the text: "Hunger, thirste, sleape, not plentiful or quiet as deade men have, heate in somer, colde in winter, *disorder of tyme*, terroure of warres, controlment of parents, cares of wedlocke, studye for children, slouthe of servaunts, *contention of sutes*, and that which is most of all, *the condycyon of tyme* wherein *honestye is disdayned* as folye, and crafte is honoured as wisdome."

[9] Thus the folio; the quartos have *despis'd* instead of *dispriz'd*. H.

[10] The allusion is to the term *quietus est*, used in settling accounts at exchequer audits. Thus in Sir Thomas Overbury's character of *a Franklin*: "Lastly, to *end* him, he cares not when his end comes; he needs not feare his audit, for his *quietus* is in heaven." *Bodkin* was the ancient term for a small dagger.

And enterprises of great pith and moment,[11]
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. — Soft you, now!
The fair Ophelia. — Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.[12]

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.[13]

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, I know right well you did;[14]
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost.
Take these again; for, to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord!

Ham. Are you fair?[15]

[11] The quartos have *pitch* instead of *pith*. The folio misprints *away* for *awry*, in the next line. In the third line before, the words, "of us all." are from the folio. H.

[12] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect that he is to personate madness, but makes an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts. — JOHNSON.

[13] Thus the folio; the quartos have *well* but once. The repetition seems very apt and forcible, as suggesting the opposite of what the word means. H.

[14] The quartos have "*you* know" instead of "*I* know." We scarce know which to prefer; but, on the whole, the folio reading seems to have more of delicacy, and at least equal feeling. H.

[15] Here it is evident that the penetrating Hamlet perceives, from

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.[16]

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.[17]

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why would'st

the strange and forced manner of Ophelia, that the sweet girl was not acting a part of her own, but was a decoy; and his after speeches are not so much directed to her as to the listeners and spies. Such a discovery in a mood so anxious and irritable accounts for a certain harshness in him; — and yet a wild up-working of love, sporting with opposites in a wilful self-tormenting strain of irony, is perceptible throughout. "I did love you once," — "I loved you not:" — and particularly in his enumeration of the faults of the sex from which Ophelia is so free, that the mere freedom therefrom constitutes her character. Note Shakespeare's charm of composing the female character by absence of characters, that is, marks and out-juttings. — COLERIDGE. H.

[16] That is, "your honesty should not admit your beauty to any discourse with it." — The quartos have merely *you* instead of *your honesty*. — In the next speech, the folio substitutes *your* for *with*. — It should be noted, that in these speeches Hamlet refers, not to Ophelia personally, but to the sex in general. So, especially, when he says, "I have heard of your paintings too," he does not mean that Ophelia paints, but that the use of paintings is common with her sex. H.

[17] Mrs. Jameson, speaking of this and the preceding speech of Ophelia, says. — "Those who have ever heard Mrs. Siddons read the play of Hamlet cannot forget the world of meaning, of love of sorrow, of despair, conveyed in these two simple phrases." H.

thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God hath given you one face,[18] and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance.[19] Go to; I'll no more on't: it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married

[18] The folio, for *paintings*, has *pratlings*; and for *face* has *pace*. *Too* is from the folio.

[19] "You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*."

already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.[20] [*Exit*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,[21]
Th' observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstacy.[22] O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter the King and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend:
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down: He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:

[20] Observe this dallying with the inward purpose, characteristic of one who had not brought his mind to the steady acting-point. He would fain sting the uncle's mind; — but to stab his body! — The soliloquy of Ophelia, which follows, is the perfection of love, — so exquisitely unselfish! — COLERIDGE.

[21] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. The quartos have *expectation* instead of *expectancy*.

[22] *Ecstacy* was often used for insanity or any alienation of mind. See The Tempest, Act iii. sc. 3, note 12. — The quartos have *stature* instead of *feature*, and "*what* noble" for "*that* noble" H.

Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. — How now, Ophelia
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. — My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone intreat him
To show his griefs; let her be round with him;[23]
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. A Hall in the Same.

Enter HAMLET, *and certain Players.*

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do,[1] I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines. Nor do not

[23] To be *round* with any one, is to be *plain-spoken, downright*; often so used. H.

[1] Thus the folio and first quarto; the other quartos have *our* instead of *your*. — For, "I had as lief the town crier spoke," the first quarto reads, "I had rather hear a town bull bellow." — "This dialogue of Hamlet with the players," says Coleridge, "is one of the happiest instances of Shakespeare's power of diversifying the scene while he is carrying on the plot." H

saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings;[2] who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod:[3] pray you, avoid it.

1 *Play.* I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirrour up

[2] Our ancient theatres were far from the commodious, elegant structures which later times have seen. The *pit* was, truly, what its name denotes, an unfloored space in the area of the house, sunk considerably beneath the level of the stage. Hence this part of the audience were called *groundlings*. Jonson, in the Induction to Bartholomew Fair, calls them "the *understanding* gentlemen of the *ground*;" and Shirley, "grave *understanders*."

[3] *Termagaunt* is the name given in old romances to the tempestuous god of the Saracens. He is usually joined with *Mahound* or Mahomet. Davenant derives the name from *ter magnus*. And resolute John Florio calls him "*Termigisto*, a great boaster, quarreller, killer, tamer or ruler of the universe; the child of the earthquake and of the thunder, the brother of death." Hence this personage was introduced into the old mysteries and moralities as a demon of outrageous and violent demeanour; or, as Bale says, "*Termagauntes* altogether, and very devils incarnate."—The murder of the innocents was a favourite subject for a mystery; and wherever Herod is introduced, he plays the part of a vaunting braggart, a tyrant of tyrants, and does indeed *outlo Termagant*.

to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.[4] Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must, in your allowance,[5] o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O! there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men,[6] and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abomi nably.

1 *Play.* I hope we have reform'd that indifferently with us.

Ham. O! reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.— [*Exeunt Players.*

[4] *Pressure* is impression, resemblance.

[5] That is, approval, estimation.

[6] A friend suggests whether *men* should not have *the* before it, or else be *them*. This would give a very different sense, limiting it from men in general to the particular players in question. Perhaps it may be doubted whether Hamlet means that he had thought the players themselves to be the second-hand workmanship of nature, from their imitating humanity so falsely, or whether he had taken their imitation as true, and so extended his thought of second-hand workmanship over all mankind. However, our best road to what he *means*, is by what he *says*, probably. Malone would read *them* H.

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. —

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. We will, my lord.[7]

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. What, ho! Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O! my dear lord, —

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,[8]
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself:[9] for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;

[7] So the folio; the quartos, "*Ros.* Ay, my lord." H.

[8] *Pregnant* is quick, ready.

[9] Thus the folio; the quartos make *election* the object of *distinguish*, and use *She* as the subject of *hath seal'd*. — In the fourth line after, the quartos have *co-meddled* instead of *co-mingled*. H.

A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul[10]
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy.[11] Give him heedful note:
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play: I must be idle;
Get you a place.

[10] That is, with the most intense direction of every faculty. The folio has "*my* soul," which Knight and Collier strangely prefer, on the ground that "Hamlet is putting Horatio in his place, for the purpose of watching the king." One would think that Hamlet, though he "must be idle," that is, *appear* so, means to stand in his own place, for that purpose; else why should he say,—"I mine eyes will rivet to his face?" H.

[11] That is, Vulcan's workshop or *smithy*; *stith* being an *anvil*

Danish March. A Flourish. Enter the King, the Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and Others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—[*To* POLON.] My lord, you play'd once i'the university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i'the Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.[12]

Ham. It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.[13]

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*To the King.*] O ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA'S *Feet.*

Oph. No, my lord.

[12] A Latin play on Cæsar's death was performed at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1582. Malone thinks that there was an English play on the same subject previous to Shakespeare's. Cæsar was killed in *Pompey's portico*, and not in the Capitol: but the error is at least as old as Chaucer's time.

[13] That is, they *wait* upon your *sufferance* or *will*. Johnson would have changed the word to *pleasure;* but Shakespeare has it in a similar sense in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act iii. sc. 1: "And think my *patience* more than thy desert is privilege for thy departure hence."

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?[14]

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God! your only jig-maker.[15] What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, 'fore I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse; whose epitaph is, "For, O! for, O! the hobby-horse is forgot."[17]

[14] This question and the answer to it are only in the folio. H.

[15] See Act ii. sc. 2, note 51.

[16] Hanmer would read *ermine*, on the ground that *sable* is itself a mourning colour. But sables were among the most rich and costly articles of dress; and a statute of the reign of Henry VIII. made it unlawful for any one under the rank of an earl to wear them. The meaning is well explained by Knight, thus: "If Hamlet had said, 'Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of ermine,' he would merely have said, 'Let the devil be in mourning, for I'll be fine.' But, as it is, he says, 'Let the devil wear the real colours of grief, but I'll be magnificent in a garb that only has a facing of something like grief.'" H.

[17] Alluding to the expulsion of the hobby-horse from the May

Trumpets sound. The Dumb Show enters.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a Fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loth and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

[Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.[18]

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him: Be not you asham'd to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught: I'll mark the play.

games, where he had long been a favourite. See Love's Labour's Lost, Act iii. sc. 1, note 6. H.

[18] *Miching mallecho* is lurking mischief, or evil doing. To *mich* for to skulk, to lurk, was an old English verb in common use in Shakespeare's time; and *mallecho* or *malhecho, misdeed,* he has borrowed from the Spanish.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?
Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord,
Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen.

King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orbed ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me! you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women's fear and love hold quantity;[20]
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.[21]

King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:

[19] *Cart, car,* and *chariot* were used indiscriminately. — "The stye," says Coleridge, "of the interlude here is distinguished from the real dialogue by rhyme, as in the first interview with the players by epic verse." H.

[20] So the folio; the quartos have a different reading, giving two lines for one:

"For *women fear too much, even as they love;*
And women's fear and love hold quantity." H.

[21] The last two lines of this speech are not in the folio. H

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou —

Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. [*Aside.*] That's wormwood.

Queen. The instances, that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

King. I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures [22] with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark, his favourite flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies:
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.[23]

[22] That is, their own *determinations*, what they *enact*.
[23] *Season* was very commonly used in the sense of to *temper*

But, orderly to end where I begun, —
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope![24]
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. [*To* OPHE.] If she should break it now,

King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O! but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

Ham. No, no; they do but jest, poison in jest: no offence i'the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in

as before in this play: "*Season* your admiration for a while." See also, Act i. sc. 3, note 14. H.

[24] *Anchor's* for *anchoret's*. Thus in Hall's second Satire:

"*Sit* seven years pining in an *anchor's cheyre*,
To win some patched shreds of minivere."

Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name;[25] his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon: 'tis a knavish piece of work; but what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the gall'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung.—

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.[26]

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands.[27]—Begin, murderer: leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come:—The croaking raven both bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

[25] All the old copies read thus. Yet in the dumb show we have, "Enter a *King* and Queen;" and at the end of this speech, "Lucianus, nephew to the *king*." This seeming inconsistency, however, may be reconciled. Though the interlude is the *image* of the murder of the *duke* of Vienna, or in other words founded upon that story, the Poet might make the principal person in *his fable* a *king*. *Baptista* is always the name of a man.

[26] The use to which Shakespeare put the *chorus* may be seen in King Henry V. Every motion or puppet-show was accompanied oy an *interpreter* or showman.

[27] Alluding, most likely, to the language of the Marriage service: "To have and to hold from this day forward, *for better, for worse*, for richer, for poorer," &c.—All the old copies, but the first quarto, have *mistake;* which Theobald conjectured should be *must take*, before any authority for it was known. H.

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,[28]
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i'the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frighted with false fire?[29]

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light! — away!

All. Lights, lights, lights![30]

[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
Thus runs the world away. —
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk[31] with me,) with two Provincial roses on my rac'd shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?[32]

[28] That is, weeds collected at midnight; as in Macbeth: "Root of hemlock, *digg'd i'the dark.*" H.

[29] This speech is found only in the folio and the quarto of 1603. H.

[30] In the quartos, this speech is given to Polonius. H.

[31] To *turn Turk* was a familiar phrase for any violent change of condition or character.

[32] Mr. Douce has shown that the *Provincial* roses took their name from *Provins*, in Lower Brie, and not from *Provence*. *Rac'd* shoes are most probably *embroidered* shoes. The quartos read, *raz'd*. To *race*, or *rase*, was to *stripe*. So in Markham's County Farm, speaking of wafer cakes: "Baking all together between two irons, having within them many *raced* and checkered draughts after the manner of small squares." — It was usual to call a *pack*

Hor. Half a share.[33]

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear!
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very — peacock.[34]

Hor. You might have rhym'd.

Ham. O, good Horatio! I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning, —

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! — Come; some music! come; the recorders![35] —

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, — he likes it not, perdy.[36] —

of hounds a *cry;* from the French *meute* de chiens. it is here humourously applied to a *troop* or *company* of players. It is used again in Coriolanus: Menenius says to the citizens, "You have made good work, you and your *cry.*"

[33] The players were paid not by salaries, but by *shares* or portions of the profit, according to merit.

[34] The old copies have *paiock* and *paiocke.* There being no such word known, Pope changed it to *peacock;* which is probably right, the allusion being, perhaps, to the fable of the crow that decked itself with peacock's feathers. Or the meaning may be the same as explained by Florio, thus: "Pavoneggiare, to court it, to brave it, to *peacockise* it, to wantonise it, to get up and down fondly, gazing upon himself as a peacock does." Mr. Blakeway, however, suggests *puttock,* a base degenerate hawk, which is contrasted with the eagle in Cymbeline, Act i. sc. 2: "I chose an *eagle,* and did avoid a *puttock.*" H

[35] See A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act v. sc. 1, note 11. It is difficult to settle exactly the form of this instrument: old writers in general make no distinction between a flute, a pipe, and a recorder; but Hawkins has shown clearly, from a passage in Lord Bacon's Natural History, that the flute and the recorder were distinct instruments.

[36] *Perdy* is a corruption of the French *par Dieu.*

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Come; some music!

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir, —

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. — is in his retirement marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: — pronounce.

Guil. The queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon, and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseas'd: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother; therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say, —

Ros. Then, thus she says: Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O, wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! — But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.[37]

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, but bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but, "While the grass grows," — The proverb is something musty. —

Enter the Players, with Recorders.

O, the recorders! — let me see one. — To withdraw with you:[38] — why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?[39]

[37] This is explained by a clause in the Church Catechism: "To keep my hands from *picking* and *stealing*." — The quartos have "*And* do still." instead of "*So I* do still." The latter reading gives a very different sense, and one of our reasons for preferring it is thus stated by Coleridge: "I never heard an actor give this word 'so' its proper emphasis. Shakespeare's meaning is, — 'Lov'd you? Hum! *so* I do still.' There has been no change in my opinion: I think as ill of you as I did." H.

[38] To *withdraw*, it is said, is sometimes used as a hunting term, meaning to *draw back*, to leave the scent or trail. H.

[39] "To *recover the wind* of me" is a term borrowed from hunt

Guil. O, my lord! if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.[40]

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb,[41] give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony: I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood! do you think I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you

ing, and means, to take advantage of the animal pursued, by getting to the windward of it, that it may not scent its pursuers. "Observe how the wind is, that you may set the net so as the hare and wind may come together; if the wind be sideways it may do well enough, but never if it blow over the net into the hare's face, for he will scent both it and you at a distance." — *Gentleman's Recreation.*

[40] Hamlet may say with propriety, "I do not well understand that." Perhaps Guildenstern means, "If my duty to the king makes me too bold, my love to you makes me importunate even to rudeness."

[41] The *ventages* are the holes of the pipe. The *stops* means the mode of stopping those ventages to produce notes.

will, though you can fret me,[42] you cannot play upon me. —

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then, will I come to my mother by and by. — They fool me to the top of my bent. — I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit.*

Ham. By and by is easily said. — Leave me, friends. — [*Exeunt all but* HAMLET.

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When church-yards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day[43]
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother. —
O, heart! lose not thy nature; let not ever

[42] Hamlet keeps up the allusion to a musical instrument. The *frets* of a lute or guitar are the ridges crossing the finger-board, upon which the strings are pressed or *stopped*. Of course a quibble is intended on *fret*. H.

[43] Thus the folio; the quartos read, "such business as the bitter day." In the second line before, the quartos have *breaks* instead of *breathes*. H.

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent,[44]
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. A Room in the Same.

Enter the King, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you:
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous, as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.[1]

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but like a gulf doth draw

[44] To *shend* is to *injure*, whether by reproof, blows, or otherwise. Shakespeare generally uses *shent* for reproved, threatened with angry words. "To give his words *seals*" is therefore to carry his punishment beyond *reproof*. The allusion is the sealing a deed to render it effective.

[1] So the folio; the quartos read "so *near us*" instead of "so *dangerous*," and *brows* instead of *lunacies*.

What's near it with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. Guil. We will haste us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process: I'll warrant, she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech of vantage.[2] Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord. —
[*Exit* POLONIUS.

O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder! — Pray can I not:
Though inclination be as sharp as will,[3]
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;

[2] "Speech of *vantage*" probably means "speech having the advantage of a mother's partiality." H.

[3] That is, "though I were not only willing, but strongly inclined to pray, my guilt would prevent me."

And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down? Then, I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O! what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder?—
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain th' offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can? What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O, wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O, limed soul![4] that, struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd. Help, angels! make assay:
Bow stubborn knees; and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe:
All may be well![5] [*Retires and kneels.*

[4] That is, caught as with birdlime. See 2 Henry VI., Act i sc. 3, note 6.

[5] This speech well marks the difference between crime and

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying
And now I'll do't: — and so he goes to heaven;
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:[6]
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.[7]
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad-blown, as flush as May,
And how his audit stands, who knows, save Heaven?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: and am I, then, reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:

guilt of habit. The conscience here is still admitted to audience. Nay, even as an audible soliloquy, it is far less improbable than is supposed by such as have watched men only in the beaten road of their feelings. But the final — "All may be well!" is remarkable; — the degree of merit attributed by the self-flattering soul to its own struggles, though baffled, and to the indefinite half promise, half command, to persevere in religious duties. — COLERIDGE. H.

[6] That requires consideration. — In the first line of this speech, the quartos read "*but* now *'a* is *a* praying," instead of "*pat*, now *he* is praying." And in the fifth line, the folio has *foul* instead of *sole*. H.

[7] Thus the folio; the quartos have "*base* and *silly*" instead of "*hire* and *salary*." H.

[8] That is, more horrid *seizure*, *grasp*, or *hold*. *Hent* was often used as a verb in the same sense. See The Winter's Tale, Act iv. sc. 2, note 19. — Dr. Johnson and others have exclaimed against what Hamlet here says, as showing a thorough-paced and unmitigable fiendishness of spirit. Coleridge much more justly regards the motives assigned for sparing the king, as "the marks of reluctance and procrastination." At all events, that they are not Hamlet's *real* motives, is evident from their very extravagance.

When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in th' incestuous pleasures of his bed;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven;
And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

The King rises and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV. Another Room in the Same.

Enter the Queen and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him;
Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with;
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother![1]

With the full conviction that he *ought* to kill the king, he joins a deep instinctive moral repugnance to the deed: and he here flies off to an *ideal* revenge, in order to quiet his filial feelings without violating his conscience; effecting a compromise between them, by *adjourning* a purpose which, as a man, he dare not execute, nor, as a son, abandon. He afterwards asks Horatio,—"Is't not *perfect conscience*, to quit him with this arm?" which confirms the view here taken, as it shows that even then his mind was not at rest on that score. H.

[1] This speech is found only in the folio. H

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not: — withdraw; I hear him coming.
[POLONIUS *hides himself.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother! what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come; you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go; you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And — would it were not so! — you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge:
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help! help! help!

Ham. [*Drawing.*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead.
[HAMLET *makes a pass through the Arras.*

Pol. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain. [*Falls, and dies.*

Queen. O me! what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not: Is it the king?

[*He lifts up the Arras, and draws forth* POLONIUS.

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
[*To* POLON.] Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:
Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.—
Leave wringing of your hands: Peace! sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O! such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul,[2] and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: Heaven's face doth glow,
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.[3]

[2] *Contraction* here means the *marriage contract.* H.
[3] So the folio: the quartos read thus:

Queen. Ah me! what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?[4]

Ham. Look here upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury,[5]
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill:
A combination and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother.[6] Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten[7] on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion; but, sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,

"Heaven's face does glow
O'er this solidity and compound mass,
With *heated* visage," &c. H.

[4] The *index*, or table of contents, was formerly placed at the beginning of books. In Othello, Act ii. sc. 2, we have, "an *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of lust and foul thoughts."

[5] *Station* does not mean the spot where any one is placed, but the *act of standing*, the *attitude*. So in Antony and Cleopatra, Act iii. sc. 3: "Her motion and her *station* are as one."

[6] Here the allusion is to Pharaoh's dream; Genesis xli.

[7] That is, to feed rankly or grossly: it is usually applied to the fattening of animals. Marlowe has it for "to grow fat." *Bat* is the old word for *increase*; whence we have *battle, batten fatful*.

Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference.[8] What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?[9]
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.[10]
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,[11]
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.[12]

Queen. O, Hamlet! speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots[13]
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed;[14]
Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty sty; —

[8] This passage, beginning at "Sense, sure, you have," is wanting in the folio. Likewise, that just after, beginning, "Eyes without feeling," and ending, "Could not so mope." H.

[9] "The hoodwinke play, or *hoodman blind*, in some place called *blindmanbuf*." — BARET.

[10] That is, could not be so *dull and stupid*.

[11] *Mutine* for *mutiny*. This is the old form of the verb. Shakespeare calls *mutineers mutines* in a subsequent scene.

[12] The quartos have *pardons* instead of *panders*. H.

[13] "*Grained* spots" are spots *ingrained*, or *dyed in the grain*. H.

[14] *Enseamed* is a term borrowed from falconry. It is well known that the *seam* of any animal was the fat or tallow; and a hawk was said to be *enseamed* when she was too fat or gross for flight. — The undated quarto and that of 1611 read *incestuous*.

Queen. O, speak to me no more!
These words like daggers enter in mine ears:
No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord: —a vice of kings![15]
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Enter the Ghost.[16]

Ham. A king of shreds and patches. —
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! — What would your gracious figure?

Queen. Alas! he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion,[17] lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost-blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O! step between her and her fighting soul;

[15] That is, "the low mimic, the counterfeit, a dizard, or common *vice* and jester, *counterfeiting* the gestures of any man." — FLEMING. Shakespeare afterwards calls him *a king of shreds and patches*, alluding to the party-coloured habit of the *vice* or fool in a play.

[16] When the Ghost goes out, Hamlet says, — "Look, how it steals away! my father, *in his habit as he liv'd.*" It has been much argued what is meant by this; that is, whether the Ghost should wear armour here, as in former scenes, or appear in a different dress. The question is set at rest by the stage-direction in the first quarto: "Enter the Ghost, *in his night-gown.*" H.

[17] Johnson explains this — "That having suffered *time* to *slip* and *passion* to *cool*," &c.

Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.[18]
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas! how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,[19]
Starts up, and stands on end. O, gentle son!
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him! — Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.[20] — Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern affects:[21] then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

[18] *Conceit* for *conception, imagination.* This was the common force of the word in the Poet's time.

[19] That is, like excrements *alive*, or having *life in them*. *Hair*, nails, feathers, &c., were called *excrements*, as being without life. See The Winter's Tale, Act iv. sc. 3, note 47. H.

[20] That is, would put sense and understanding into them. The use of *capable* for *susceptible, intelligent*, is not peculiar to Shakespeare. H.

[21] *Affects* was often used for *affections;* as in Othello, "the young *affects* in me defunct." The old copies read *effects*, which was a frequent misprint for *affects*. Singer justly remarks, that "the 'piteous action' of the Ghost could not alter things already *effected*, but might move Hamlet to a less stern *mood of mind*." H.

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.
Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal.
[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy[22]
Is very cunning in.
Ham. Ecstacy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness,
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from.[23] Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker.[24] Forgive me this my virtue
For in the fatness of these pursy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
Yea, curb[25] and woo, for leave to do him good.

[22] This word has occurred in the same sense before. See scene 1, of this Act, note 22. H.

[23] Science has found the Poet's test a correct one. Dr. Ray, of Providence, in his work on the Jurisprudence of Insanity, thus states the point: "In simulated mania, the impostor, when requested to repeat his disordered idea, will generally do it correctly; while the genuine patient will be apt to wander from the track, or introduce ideas that had not presented themselves before." H.

[24] That is, do not by any new indulgence heighten your former offences.

[25] That is, *bow*. "Courber, Fr., to bow, crook, or curb."

Queen. O, Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O! throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,[26]
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy,
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And master the devil or throw him out[27]
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,

[26] A very obscure and elliptical passage, if indeed it be not corrupt. We have adopted Caldecott's pointing, which gives the meaning somewhat thus: "That monster, custom, who devours or eats out all sensibility or feeling as to what we do, though he be the devil or evil genius of our habits, is yet our good angel in this." Collier and Verplanck order the pointing thus: "Who all sense doth eat of habits, devil, is angel yet in this." Where the meaning is, — "That monster, custom, who takes away all sense of habits, devil though he be, is still an angel in this respect." This also pleads a fair title to preference, and we find it not easy to choose between the two. Dr. Thirlby proposed to read, "Of habits *evil*;" which would give the clear and natural sense, that by custom we lose all feeling or perception of bad habits, and become reconciled to them as if they were nature. The probability, however, that an antithesis was meant between *devil* and *angel*, is against this reading; otherwise, we should incline to think it right. — The whole sentence is omitted in the folio; as is also the passage beginning with "the next more easy," and ending with "wondrous potency." H.

[27] So the undated quarto and that of 1611; the others have *either* instead of *master*. Some editors, probably not knowing or not consulting the copies first mentioned, have supplied *curb* or *quell* after *either* H

I'll blessing beg of you. — For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.
I do repent: but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.[28]
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night!
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind. —
But one word more, good lady.[29]

Queen. What shall I do

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;[30]
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,[31]
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good, you let him know,
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,[32]
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,

[28] The pronoun *their* refers, apparently, to *heaven*, which is here a collective noun, put for the *heavenly powers*. H.

[29] The words "But one word more, good lady," are not in the folio. And in the next line but one, the folio has *blunt* instead of *bloat*. H.

[30] *Mouse* was a term of endearment. Thus Burton, in his Anatomy of Melancholy: "Pleasant names may be invented, bird, *mouse*, lamb, p ss, pigeon."

[31] *Reeky* and *reechy* are the same word, and always applied to any vapourous exhalation, even to the fumes of a dunghill. See Coriolanus, Act ii. sc. 1. note 18.

[32] A *paddock* is a *toad*; a *gib*, a *cat*. See Macbeth, Act i. sc. , note 3; and 1 Henry IV., Act i. sc. 2, note 6. H.

To try conclusions in the basket creep,[33]
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.[34]

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack
I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd; and my two school fellows, —
Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd, —
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar;[35] and it shall go hard,

[33] *To try conclusions* is to put to proof, or try experiments. See Antony and Cleopatra, Act v. sc. 2, note 33. Sir John Suckling possibly alludes to the same story in one of his letters: "It is the story after all of the jackanapes and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too."

[34] "I confess," says Coleridge, "that Shakespeare has left the character of the Queen in an unpleasant perplexity. Was she, or was she not, conscious of the fratricide?" This "perplexity," whatever it be, was doubtless designed by the Poet; for in the original form of the play she stood perfectly clear on this score; as appears from several passages in the quarto of 1603, which were afterwards disciplined out of the text. Thus, in one place of this scene, she says to Hamlet, —

> "But, as I have a soul, I swear to Heaven,
> I never knew of this most horrid murder."

And in this place she speaks thus:

> "Hamlet, I vow by that Majesty,
> That knows our thoughts and looks into our hearts,
> I will conceal, consent, and do my best,
> What stratagem soe'er thou shalt devise." M.

[35] *Hoist* for *hoised*. To *hoyse* was the old verb. A *petar* was a kind of mortar used to blow up gates.

But I will delve one yard below their mines.
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.[36] —
This man shall set me packing:
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room. —
Mother, good night. — Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you. —
Good night, mother. [*Exeunt severally;* HAMLET *dragging in* POLONIUS.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. The Same.

Enter the King, the Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.[1] —
[*Exeunt* ROSEN. *and* GUILDEN.
Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

[36] The foregoing part of this speech is wanting in the folio. H.

[1] This line is omitted in the folio; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern not being there introduced till the King calls them, at the place of their re-entrance. — In the next line, the quartos have "*mine own* lord," instead of "*my good* lord." H.

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, "A rat! a rat!"[2]
And in his brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O, heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,[3]
This mad young man: but, so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,[4]
Shows itself pure: he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude! come away.
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,

[2] So reads the folio; the quartos give the line thus: "Whips out his rapier, cries, 'a rat! a rat!'" In the next line, also, the quartos have *this* instead of *his*. H.

[3] Out of *haunt* means out of *company*.

[4] Shakespeare, with a license not unusual among his contemporaries, uses *ore* for *gold*, and *mineral* for *mine*. Bullokar and Blount both define "*or* or *ore*, *gold*; of a golden colour." And the Cambridge Dictionary, 1594, under the Latin word *mineralia*, will show how the English *mineral* came to be used for a mine. Thus also in The Golden Remaines of Hales of Eton, 1693: "Controversies of the times, like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour nothing is done."

But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. — Ho! Guildenstern!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him
Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this. —
[*Exeunt* ROSEN. *and* GUILDEN.
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: so, haply, slander—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,[5]
Transports his poison'd shot — may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air.[6] — O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Another Room in the Same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stowed.
Ros. and Guil. [*Within.*] Hamlet! lord Hamlet!

[5] The *blank* was the *mark* at which shots or arrows were directed.

[6] All this passage, after "untimely done," is wanting in the folio. The words, "so, haply, slander," are not in any old copy, but were supplied by Theobald as necessary to the sense. The well-known passage in Cymbeline, Act iii. sc. 4, beginning,— "No; 'tis slander," — will readily occur to any student of Shakespeare, as favouring the insertion. H.

Ham. But soft! — what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O! here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell me where 'tis; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, as an ape doth nuts,[1] in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd, to be last swallowed: When he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body.[2] The king is a thing—

[1] The words, "as an ape doth nuts," are from the quarto of 1603. The other quartos merely have, "like an *apple*;" which Farmer and Ritson conjectured should be, "like *an ape* an apple." The folio has, "*like* an ape," only. H.

[2] Hamlet is purposely talking riddles, in order to tease and

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. —of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.[3] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. Another Room in the Same.

Enter the King, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, th' offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all.—How now! what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

puzzle his questioners. The meaning of this riddle, to the best of our guessing, is, that the king's body is with the king, but not the king's soul: he's a king without kingliness; "a king of shreds and patches." H.

[3] "Hide fox, and all after" was a juvenile sport, most probably what is now called *hoop*, or *hide and seek*; in which one child hides himself, and the rest run *all after*, seeking him.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten; a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.[1] Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas![2]

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.[3]

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. [*To Attendants.*] Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

[1] Alluding, no doubt, to the Diet of Worms, which Protestants of course regarded as a convocation of *politicians*. There were little need of saying this, but that Mr. Collier's second folio supplies *palated* for *politic*, the word being omitted in the folios; and Mr. Collier thinks *palated* is "certainly more applicable in the place where it occurs." More applicable! H

[2] This speech and the following one are omitted in the folio.

[3] Alluding to the royal *journeys* of state, styled *progresses*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, —
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, — must send thee hence
With fiery quickness; therefore prepare thyself:
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
Th' associates tend,[4] and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. — But, come; for England! — Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard:
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night:
Away; for every thing is seal'd and done,
That else leans on th' affair: 'Pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt* ROSEN. *and* GUILDEN
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set[5]

[4] That is, the associates of your voyage *are waiting*. — "The wind *at help*" means, the wind *serves*, or is right, to forward you. — The words, "With fiery quickness," are not in the quartos. E.

[5] To *set* formerly meant to *estimate*. "To *sette*, or tell the pryce; *æstimare*." To *set* much or little by a thing, is to *estimate* it much or little.

Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,[6]
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.[7]

[*Exit*

SCENE IV. A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, *and Forces, marching.*

For. Go, captain; from me greet the Danish king
Tell him, that by his license Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom.[1] You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye.[2]
And let him know so.

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.[3]

[*Exeunt* FORTINBRAS *and Forces.*

[6] The folio has *conjuring;* the quartos, *congruing*, which may be right, in the sense of *concurring* or *agreeing*. *Conjuring* is *earnestly requesting*. See Romeo and Juliet, Act v. sc. 3, note 3. H.

[7] Thus the folio; the quartos, "my joys *will* ne'er *begin*." The folio reading is preferred on account of the rhyme; with which the scenes in this play are commonly closed. H.

[1] The quartos have *craves* instead of *claims*, the reading of the folio. H.

[2] In the Regulations for the Establishment of the Queen's Household, 1627: "All such as doe service *in the queen's eye*." And in The Establishment of Prince Henry's Household, 1610. "All such as doe service *in the prince's eye*."

[3] These words are probably spoken to the troops. The folio has *safely* instead of *softly*. — What follows of this scene is wanting in the folio. H.

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *&c.*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand
ducats,
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. — I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit Captain.*

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little be-
fore. — [*Exeunt* ROSEN. *and* GUILDEN

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, He, that made us with such large discourse
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason,

To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on th' event,—
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wis
dom,
And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to do;"
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me
Witness, this army of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
Is not to stir without great argument;
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,[4]
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause;
Which is not tomb enough, and continent,[5]
To hide the slain?—O! from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[*Exit.*

[4] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance.

[5] *Continent* means that which contains or encloses. "If there be no fulnesse, then is the *continent* greater than the content."—*Bacon's Advancement of Learning.*

SCENE V. Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.

Enter the Queen, and HORATIO.[1]

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she hears
There's tricks i'the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws;[2] speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection;[3] they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.[4]

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
Let her come in.— [*Exit* HORATIO.
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

[1] In this stage-direction, and in the assigning of the speeches in this scene, we follow the folio. The quartos add "*and a Gentleman*," and assign Horatio's first two speeches to him. H.

[2] *Envy* was continually used for *malice, spite,* or *hatred.* See The Merchant of Venice, Act iv. sc. 1, note 1.

[3] That is, to *gather* or deduce consequences. To *aim* is to *guess.* The quartos have *yawn;* the folio, *aim.*

[4] *Unhappily* is here used in the sense of *mischievously.* See Much Ado about Nothing, Act ii. sc. 1, note 21. H.

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:[5]
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA.[6]

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?[7]

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

Oph. [*Sings.*] How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.[8]

Queen. Alas, sweet lady! what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia, —

[5] Shakespeare is not singular in the use of *amiss* as a substantive. Several instances are adduced by Mr. Nares in his Glossary. "Each *toy*" is each *trifle*.

[6] In the quarto of 1603, this stage-direction is curious as showing that Ophelia was originally made to play an accompaniment to her singing. It reads thus: "Enter Ophelia, playing on a lute, and her hair down, singing." H.

[7] There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage more pathetic than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effects. In the latter case the audience supply what is wanting, and with the former they sympathize. — SIR J. REYNOLDS.

[8] These were the badges of pilgrims. The *cockle shell* was an emblem of their intention to go beyond sea. The habit being held sacred, was often assumed as a disguise in love-adventures. In The Old Wive's Tale, by Peele, 1595: "I will give thee a palmer's *staff* of ivory, and a *scallop shell* of beaten gold."

Oph. Pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] White his shroud as the mountain snow,

Enter the King.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord.

Oph. Larded with sweet flowers;[9]
Which bewept to the grave did not go,
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God'ield you![10] They say, the owl was a baker's daughter.[11] Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

To-morrow is St. Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:[12]

[9] *Larded* is *garnished.* The quartos have *all* after *larded.* — In the next line, the quartos, all but the first, have *ground* instead of *grave;* and all the old copies read, "did *not* go;" which is against both sense and metre, and was therefore considered an error by Pope; but it seems that Ophelia purposely alters the song, to suit the "obscure funeral" of her father. H.

[10] That is, God *yield,* or *reward* you.

[11] This is said to be a common tradition in Gloucestershire. Mr. Douce relates it thus: "Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough in the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter who, insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out, 'Heugh, heugh, heugh' which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour to transform her into that bird for her wickedness." The story is told to deter children from illiberal behaviour to the poor.

[12] The origin of the choosing of Valentines has not been clearly

Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;[13]
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la! without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

By Gis, and by St. Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't,
By cock, they are to blame.[14]

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed:

He answers,—

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient; but I cannot choose but weep, to think

developed. Mr. Douce traces it to a Pagan custom of the same kind during the Lupercalia feasts in honour of Pan and Juno, celebrated in the month of February by the Romans. The anniversary of the good bishop, or Saint Valentine, happening in this month, the pious early promoters of Christianity placed this popular custom under the patronage of the saint, in order to eradicate the notion of its pagan origin. In France the *Valantin* was a moveable feast, celebrated on the first Sunday in Lent, which was called the *jour des brandons*, because the boys carried about lighted torches on that day. It is very probable that the saint has nothing to do with the custom; his legend gives no clue to any such supposition. The popular notion that the birds choose their mates about this period has its rise in the poetical world of fiction.

[13] To *dup* is to *do up*, as to *don* is to *do on*. Thus in Damon and Pythias, 1582: "The porters are drunk; will they not *dup* the gate to-day?" The phrase probably had its origin from *doing up* or lifting the latch. In the old cant language to *dup* the *gyger* was to open the door.

[14] For an explanation of the phrase, "By cock," see The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act i. sc. 1, note 32. H.

they would lay him i'the cold ground. My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies: good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night.

[*Exit*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. — [*Exit* HORATIO

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. And now, behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude!
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him:[15] poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,

[15] *Hugger-mugger* occurs in the same sense in North's Plutarch, Life of Brutus: "When this was done, they came to talke of Cæsars will and testament, and of his funerals and tombe. Then, Antonius thinking good his testament should be read openly, and that his bodie should be honourably buried, and not *in hugger mugger*, lest the people might thereby take occasion to be worse offended. Cassius stoutly spake against it, but Brutus went in with the motion. The phrase is thus explained by Florio: "*Clandestinare*, to hide or conceal by stealth, or *in hugger-mugger*."

H.

Wih nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O, my dear Gertrude! this,
Like to a murdering-piece,[16] in many places
Gives me superfluous death! [*A Noise within.*
Queen. Alack! what noise is this?[17]

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend!
Where are my Switzers?[18] Let them guard the door.
What is the matter?
Gent. Save yourself, my lord!
The ocean, overpeering of his list,[19]
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And — as the world were now but to begin,[20]
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word —
They cry, "Choose we; Laertes shall be king!"
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"

[16] A murdering-piece, or *murderer*, was a small piece of artillery. "*Visiere meurtriere*, a port-hole for a *murthering-piece* in the forecastle of a ship." — COTGRAVE. Case shot, filled with small bullets, nails, old iron, &c., was often used in these *murderers*. This accounts for the raking fire attributed to them in the text.

[17] This speech is found only in the folio.

[18] *Switzers*, for royal guards. The Swiss were then, as since, mercenary soldiers of any nation that could afford to pay them.

[19] That is, *swelling* beyond his *bounds*.

[20] *As* has here the force of *as if*. The explanation sometimes given of the passage is, that the rabble are the ratifiers and props of every *idle* word. The plain sense is, that antiquity and custom are the ratifiers and props of every *sound* word touching the matter in hand, the ordering of human society and the State. H

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry
O! this is counter, you false Danish dogs.[21]
King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within*

Enter LAERTES, *armed; Danes following.*

Laer. Where is this king? — Sirs, stand you all without.
Danes. No, let's come in.
Laer. I pray you, give me leave
Danes. We will, we will.
[*They retire without the Door*
Laer. I thank you: keep the door. — O, thou vile king!
Give me my father.
Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.
Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard;
Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.[22]
King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? —
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.[23] — Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd. — Let him go, Gertrude. —
Speak, man.

[21] Hounds are said to run *counter* when they are upon a false scent, or hunt it by the heel, running backward and mistaking the course of the game.

[22] *Unsmirched* is unsullied, spotless.

[23] "Proofs," says Coleridge, "as indeed all else is, that Shakespeare never intended us to see the King with Hamlet's eyes; though, I suspect, the managers have long done so." S.

Laer. Where is my father?
King. Dead.
Queen. But not by him
King. Let him demand his fill.
Laer How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,—
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes, only I'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.
King. Who shall stay you?
Laer. My will, not all the world:
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
Laer. None but his enemies.
King. Will you know them, then?
Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.[24]

[24] The pelican is a fabulous bird, often referred to by the old poets for illustration. It was also much used as a significant ornament in Mediæval church architecture, the pelican being represented as an eagle. An old book, entitled "A Choice of Emblems and other Devices, by Geffrey Whitney, 1586," contains a picture of an eagle on her nest, tearing open her breast to feed her young beneath, are the following lines:

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce[25]
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.[26]

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By Heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O, rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love; and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.[27]

Oph. They bore him barefac'd on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—

Fare you well, my dove!

"The pellican, for to revive her younge,
Doth pierce her brest, and geve them of her blood:
Then searche your brest, and, as you have with tongue,
With penne proceede to doe our countrie good." H.

[25] The folio has *pierce;* the quartos, *pear,* meaning, of course, *appear.* The latter is both awkward in language and tame in sense. Understanding *level* in the sense of *direct, pierce* gives an apt and clear enough meaning. H.

[26] Modern editions commonly add here, "*fantastically dressed with Straws and Flowers.*" There is no authority, and not much occasion, for any such stage-direction. H.

[27] This and the two preceding lines are found only in the folio as is also the second line of the next speech. K

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, —

Down a-down, an you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it![28] It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.[29]

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.[30]

[28] The *wheel* is the *burthen* of a ballad, from the Latin *rota*, a *round*, which is usually accompanied with a burthen frequently repeated. Thus also, in old French, *roterie* signified such a *round or catch*. Steevens forgot to note from whence he made the following extract, though he knew it was from the preface to some black letter collection of songs or sonnets: "The soug was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graced with the *wheele*, which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof." It should be remembered that the old musical instrument called a *rote*, from its *wheel*, was also termed *vielle*, quasi *wheel*.

[29] Meaning, probably, some old ballad, of which no traces have survived. H.

[30] Our ancestors gave to almost every flower and plant its emblematic meaning, and, like the ladies of the east, made them almost as expressive as written language. Perdita, in The Winter's Tale, distributes her flowers in the same manner as Ophelia, and some of them with the same meaning. The Handfull of Pleasant Delites, 1584, has a ballad called "A Nosegaie alwaies sweet for Lovers to send for Tokens," where we find, —

"*Rosemarie* is for *remembrance*
Betweene us day and night."

Rosemarie had this attribute because it was said to streugthen the memory, and was therefore used as a token of remembrance and affection between lovers. Why *pansies* (pensées) are emblems of thoughts is obvious. *Fennel* was emblematic of *flattery* Browne, in his Britannia's Pastorals, says, —

"The *columbine*, in tawny often taken,
Is then ascrib'd to such as are *forsaken*."

Rue was for *ruth* or *repentance*. It was also commonly called

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines:—there's rue for you, and here's some for me: we may call it herb of grace o'Sundays:—you may wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they wither'd all, when my father died.—They say, he made a good end,—

[*Sings.*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—

Laer. Thought and affliction,[31] passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. [*Sings.*] And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead;
Go to thy death-bed;
He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan:
God ha' mercy on his soul![32]

herb grace, probably from being accounted "a present remedy against all poison, and a potent auxiliary in exorcisms, all evil things fleeing from it." Wearing it with a difference was an heraldic term for a mark of distinction. The *daisy* was emblematic of a *dissembler*. The *violet* is for *faithfulness*, and is thus characterised in The Lover's Nosegaie.

[31] *Thought* was used for *grief, care, pensiveness*. "Curarum volvere in pectore. He will die for sorrow and *thought*."—BARET.

[32] Poor Ophelia in her madness remembers the ends of many old popular ballads. "Bonny Robin" appears to have been a favourite, for there were many others written to that tune. This last stanza is quoted with some variation in Eastward Ho! 1605, by Jonson, Marston, and Chapman.

And of all Christian souls! I pray God. God be wi' you![33] [*Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must common with your grief,[34]
Or you deny me right. Go but apart;
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so.
His means of death, his obscure funeral,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.[35]

King. So you shall;
And where th' offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt*

[33] The words, "I pray God," are not in the quartos. H.

[34] The use of *common* as a verb, in the sense of *making* common, or of *having* or *feeling in* common, is very frequent in the old writers. In this place, as in many others, it is usually changed to *commune*, with which it is nearly synonymous. We retain the old form, as giving a somewhat stronger sense, and also as suiting the measure better. H.

[35] The funerals of knights and persons of rank were made with great ceremony and ostentation formerly. Sir John Hawkins observes that "the sword, the helmet, the gauntlet, spurs, and tabard are still hung over the grave of every knight."

SCENE VI. Another Room in the Same.

Enter HORATIO *and a Servant.*

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors, sir:[1] they say they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.— [*Exit Servant.*
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let Him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please Him. There's a letter for you, sir: it comes from th' ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] Horatio, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear, will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter.[2] These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell:

He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.

[1] The quartos read *Sea-faring men* instead of *Sailors*. H
[2] The *bore* is the caliber of a gun.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. Another Room in the Same.

Enter the King and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears:—But tell me,
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful[1] and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O! for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and, for myself,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender[2] bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,

[1] So the folio; the quartos, *criminal.*

[2] That is, the common *race* of the people. We have the *general* and the *million* in other places in the same sense.

Convert his gyves to graces. So that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,[3]
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,[4]
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—
How now! what news?[5]

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio; he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.—
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*

[*Reads.*] High and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, first asking your pardon

[3] "*Lighte shaftes* cannot stand in a *rough wind.*" — ASCHAM.

[4] "If I may praise what has been, but is now no more."

[5] The words, "How now! what news?" and also a part of the answer, "Letters, my lord, from Hamlet," are not in the quartos.

thereunto, recount th' occasions of my sudden and more strange return.[6] HAMLET.

What should this mean! Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked,"—
And, in a postscript here, he says, "alone:"
Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come:
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus diddest thou."

King. If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so, how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now returned,
As checking at his voyage,[7] and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

[6] The words, "and more strange," are in the folio only. H.

[7] Thus the folio: the undated quarto and that of 1611 read "As *liking not*" for "As *checking at*;" the other quartos, "As *the king* at." To *check at* is a term in falconry, meaning to start away or fly off from the lure. See Twelfth Night Act ii. sc. 5, note 10 B

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein they say you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.[8]

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,[9]
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness.[10] — Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy, —
I have seen, myself, and serv'd against the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,[11]
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

[8] The Poet again nses *siege* for *seat*, that is, *place* or *rank*, in Othello, Act i. sc. 2: "I fetch my life and being from men of royal *siege*." The usage was not uncommon. H.

[9] We have elsewhere found *very* used in the sense of *mere*. H.

[10] Thus far of this speech, and all the three preceding speeches are wanting in the folio. H.

[11] That is, in *the imagination* of shapes and tricks, or *feats*. This use of *forge* and *forgery* was not unfrequent. — To *top* is to *surpass*. See King Lear, Act i. sc. 2, note 3. H.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,[12]
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers of their nation,[13]
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this, —

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father,
But that I know love is begun by time;[14]
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love[15]
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it:
And nothing is at a like goodness still;

[12] Science of defence, that is, fencing.

[13] *Scrimers*, fencers, from *escrimeur*, Fr. This unfavourable description of French swordsmen is not in the folio.

[14] As love is begun by *time*, and has its gradual increase, so *time* qualifies and abates it. *Passages of proof* are transactions of daily experience.

[15] This and the nine following lines are not in the folio. H.

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,[16]
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this "would" changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing.[17] But, to the quick o'the ulcer.
Hamlet comes back: What would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son, in deed
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,
And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose

[16] *Plurisy* is *superabundance;* the word was used in this sense as if it came from *plus, pluris.* So in Massinger's Unnatural Combat: "Thy *plurisy* of goodness is thy ill;" which Gifford explains "thy *superabundance* of goodness." H.

[17] Mr. Blakeway justly observes, that "Sorrow for neglected opportunities and time abused seems most aptly compared to *the sigh of a spendthrift;* — good resolutions not carried into effect are deeply injurious to the moral character. Like sighs, *they hurt by easing;* they unburden the mind and satisfy the conscience, without producing any effect upon the conduct."

A sword unbated,[18] and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.[19]
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.[20]

King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd: therefore this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,

[18] That is, unblunted. To *bate*, or rather *to rebate*, was to make dull. Thus in Love's Labour's Lost: "That honour which shall *bate* his scythe's keen edge." — *Pass of practice* is an *insidious thrust.*

[19] Warburton having pronounced Laertes "a *good* character," Coleridge thereupon makes the following note: "Mercy on Warburton's notion of goodness! Please to refer to the seventh scene of this Act; — 'I will do't; and, for this purpose, I'll anoint my sword,' — uttered by Laertes after the King's description of Hamlet: 'He, being remiss, most generous, and free from all contriving, will not peruse the foils.' Yet I acknowledge that Shakespeare evidently wishes, as much as possible, to spare the character of Laertes, — to break the extreme turpitude of his consent to become an agent and accomplice of the King's treachery; — and to this end he re-introduces Ophelia at the close of this scene, to afford a probable stimulus of passion in her brother." H.

[20] Ritson has exclaimed against the villanous treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot: he observes "there is more occasion that he should be pointed out for an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we are led to respect and admire in some preceding scenes." In the quarto of 1603 this contrivance originates with the king.

If this should blast in proof.[21] Soft! — let me see: —
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,[22] — I ha't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end,)
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,[23]
Our purpose may hold there. But stay! what noise?

Enter the Queen.

How, sweet queen![24]

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. — Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,[25]
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream:
There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,

[21] That is, as fire-arms sometimes burst in proving their strength.

[22] *Cunning* is skill.

[23] A *stuck* is a *thrust*. Stoccata, Ital. Sometimes called a *staccado* in English.

[24] These words occur only in the folio. — "That Laertes," says Coleridge, "might be excused in some degree for not cooling, the Act concludes with the affecting death of Ophelia; who in the beginning lay like a little projection of land into a lake or stream, covered with spray-flowers, quietly reflected in the quiet waters; but at length is undermined or loosened, and becomes a faery isle, and after a brief vagrancy sinks almost without an eddy." H.

[25] Thus the folio; the quartos, all but the first, read "*ascaunt the* brook." Also, in the next line but one, the quartos have *make* instead of *come*. — This exquisite passage is deservedly celebrated. Nothing could better illustrate the Poet's power to make the description of a thing better than the thing itself, by giving us his eyes to see it with. H.

That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,[26]
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
Which time, she chanted snatches of old lauds;[27]
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas! then, she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

[26] The ancient botanical name of the *long purples* was *testiculis morionis*, or *orchis priapiscus*. The *grosser name* to which the queen alludes is sufficiently known in many parts of England. It had kindred appellations in other languages. In Sussex it is said to be called *dead men's hands*. *Liberal* here means *free-spoken, licentious*.

[27] That is, old hymns or songs of praise. The folio has *tunes* instead of *lauds*; which, besides that it loses a fine touch of pathos, does not agree so well with *chanting*.— *Incapable* is evidently used in the sense of *unconscious*. H.

ACT V.

SCENE I. A Church-Yard.

Enter two Clowns, with Spades, &c

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee she is; therefore make her grave, straight:[1] the crowner hath set on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.[2]

[1] *Straight* for *straightway;* a common usage. H.

[2] Shakespeare's frequent and correct use of legal terms and phrases has led to the belief that he must have served something of an apprenticeship in the law. Among the legal authorities studied in his time, were Plowden's Commentaries, a black-letter book, written in the old law French. One of the cases reported by Plowden, is that of Dame Hales, regarding the forfeiture of a lease, in consequence of the suicide of Sir James Hales; and Sir John Hawkins has pointed out, that this rich burlesque of "crowner's-quest law" was probably intended as a ridicule on certain passages in that case. He produces the following speech of one of the counsel: "Walsh said that the act consists of three parts. The first is the imagination, which is a reflection or meditation of the mind, whether or no it is convenient for him to destroy himself, and what way it can be done. The second is the resolution, which is a determination of the mind to destroy himself, and to do it in this or that particular way. The third is the perfection, which is the execution of what the mind has resolved to do. And this perfection consists of two parts, the beginning and the end. The be-

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.[3]

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity, that great folks shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even-Christian.[4] Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

ginning is the doing of the act which causes the death; and the end is the death, which is only a sequel to the act." H.

[3] We must here produce another passage from Plowden, as given by Hawkins. It is the reasoning of one of the judges, and is nearly as good as that in the text: "Sir James Hales was dead, and how came he to his death? It may be answered, by drowning; and who drowned him? Sir James Hales. And when did he drown him? in his life-time. So that Sir James Hales, being alive, caused Sir James Hales to die; and the act of the living man was the death of the dead man. And then for this offence it is reasonable to punish the living man who committed the offence, and not the dead man. But how can he be said to be punished alive, when the punishment comes after his death? Sir, this can be done no other way but by divesting out of him, from the time of the act done in his life which was the cause of his death, the title and property of those things which he had in his life-time." H.

[4] *Even-Christian* for *fellow-Christian*, was the old mode of expression; and is to be found in Chaucer and the Chroniclers. Wiclliffe has *even-servant* for *fellow-servant*.

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none.[5]

1 *Clo.* What! art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digg'd: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.[6]

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well: But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill, to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.[7]

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance.*

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are ask'd this question next, say, a grave-maker: the houses that he makes last till

[5] This speech and the next, as far as *arms*, are not in the quartos.

[6] So the folio; *frame* is not in the quartos. H.

[7] This was a common phrase for giving over or ceasing to do a thing, a metaphor derived from the *unyoking* of oxen at the end of their labour.

doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoop of liquor. [*Exit 2 Clown.*

[*Sings.*] In youth, when I did love, did love, [*Digging.*]
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O! the time, for, ah! my behove
O, methought, there was nothing meet.[8]

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 *Clo.* [*Sings.*] But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipp'd me intill the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a Skull.*

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician,

[8] The original ballad from whence these stanzas are taken is printed in Tottel's Miscellany, or Songes and Sonnettes by Lord Surrey and others. 1575. The ballad is attributed to Lord Vaux, and is printed by Dr. Percy in his Reliques of Ancient Poetry. The *ohs* and the *ahs* are caused by the forcible emission of the digger's breath at each stroke of the mattock. The original runs thus:

"I lothe that I did love,
In youth that I thought swete:
As time requires for my behove,
Methinks they are not mete.

"For age with stealing steps
Hath claude me with his crowch;
And lusty youthe away he leaps,
As there had bene none such."

which this ass now o'erreaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, "Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that prais'd my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so; and now my lady Worm's;[9] chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggets[10] with 'em? mine ache to think on't.

1 *Clo.* [*Sings.*] A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet:[11]
O! a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.
[*Throws up another Skull.*

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets,[12] his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?

[9] The skull that was *my lord such-a-one's* is now *my lady worm's*.

[10] *Loggets* are small logs or pieces of wood. Hence *loggets* was the name of an ancient rustic game, wherein a stake was fixed in the ground at which *loggets* were thrown; in short, a ruder kind of quoit play.

[11] This is another stanza from the same ballad quoted in note 8. "*For and*," says Mr. Dyce, "in the present version of the stanza, answers to *And eke* in that given by Percy." So in Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle: "Your squire doth come, and with him comes the lady, *for and* the Squire of Damsels, as I take it." And in Middleton's Fair Quarrel: "A hippocrene, a tweak, *for and* a fucus." H.

[12] *Quiddits* are quirks, or subtle questions; and *quillets* are nice and frivolous distinctions. The etymology of this last fool

why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce[13] with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries:[14] Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calve-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that.[15] I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave's this, sir?

ish word has plagued many learned heads. Blount, in his Glossography, clearly points out *quodlibet* as the origin of it. Bishop Wilkins calls a *quillet* "a frivolousness."

[13] *Sconce* was not unfrequently used for *head*.—The quartos have "*mad* knave." In this speech, the folio has several other slight variations from the quartos; in which we follow the former. R.

[14] Shakespeare here is profuse of his legal learning. Ritson, a lawyer, shall interpret for him: "A recovery with *double voucher*, is the one usually suffered, and is so called from *two* persons being successively *voucher*, or called upon to warrant the tenant's title. Both *fines* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into a fee simple. Statutes are (not acts of parliament) but statutes *merchant*, and staple, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgment for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed."

[15] A quibble is here implied upon *parchment*; deeds, which were always written on parchment, being in legal language "common assurances."

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir. —

[*Sings.*] O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

1 *Clo.* For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1 *Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul! she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card,[16] or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked,[17] that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. — How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i'the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

[16] "To speak by the card," is to speak precisely, by rule, or according to a prescribed course. It is a metaphor from the seaman's *card* or chart by which he guides his course.

[17] *Picked* is *curious*, over nice. See King John, Act i. sc. 1 note 23

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born;[18] he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry; why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corses now-a-days,[19] that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

[18] By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-three years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as one that designed to go back to the university of Wittenburgh.

[19] *Now-a-days* is in the folio only.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' pour'd a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, this same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.[20]

Ham. This?

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the Skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander look'd o'this fashion i'the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

[*Throws down the Skull*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio!

[20] The repetition, "this same skull, sir," is found only in the folio. Likewise, the words, "Let me see," at the beginning of Hamlet's second speech, after. H.

Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, 'faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperial Cæsar,[21] dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O! that the earth, which kept the world in awe.
Should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw![22]

But soft! but soft! aside:—here comes the king,

Enter Priests, &c., in Procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES *and Mourners following; the King, the Queen, their Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow,
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate.[23]
Couch we awhile, and mark.

[*Retiring with* HORATIO.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes, a very noble youth: mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

[21] So the folio; the quartos, "*Imperious Cæsar.*" The two words were sometimes used indifferently. See Troilus and Cressida, Act iv. sc. 5, note 17. H.

[22] A *flaw* is a violent gust of wind, See Coriolanus, Act v. sc. 3, note 6.

[23] To *fordo* is to *undo*, to *destroy*. *Estates* was a common term for *persons of rank*.

1 *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards,[24] flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,[25]
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.[26]

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1 *Priest.* No more be done.
We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*,[27] and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i'the earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What! the fair Ophelia?

[24] *Shards* not only means fragments of pots and tiles, but rubbish of any kind. Baret has "*shardes of stones*, fragmentum lapidis;" and "*shardes*, or pieces of stones broken and shattred, rubbel or rubbish of old houses." Our version of the Bible has preserved to us *pot-sherds*; and bricklayers, in Surrey and Sussex use the compounds *tile-sherds*, *slate-sherds*. The word is not in the quartos.—*For*, in the preceding line, has the force of *instead of*.

[25] That is, *garlands*. Still used in most northern languages but no other example of its use among us has yet offered itself It is thought that Shakespeare may have met with the word in some old history of Hamlet, which furnished him with his fable. The folio changed this unusual word for *rites*, a less appropriate word.

[26] *Of* has here the force of *with*.

[27] A *requiem* is a mass sung for the rest of the soul. So called from the words, "Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine."

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!
[*Scattering Flowers.*
I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not to have strew'd thy grave.
Laer. O! treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee off!—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.
[*Leaps into the Grave*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead;
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.
Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the Grave.*
Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*
Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand.
King. Pluck them asunder.
Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!
All. Gentlemen,—
Hor. Good my lord, be quiet. [*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the Grave.*
Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. — What wilt thou do for her?

King. O! he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Zounds, show me what thou'lt do.
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up Esill,[28] eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. — Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

[28] So this name is spelt in the quartos, all but that of 1603 which has *vessels*. The folio spells it *Esile*. What particular lake, river, firth, or gulf was meant by the Poet, is something uncertain. The more common opinion is, that he had in mind the river *Yesel* which, of the larger branches of the Rhine, is the one nearest to Denmark. In the maps of our time, *Isef* is the name of a gulf almost surrounded by land, in the island of Zealand, not many miles west of Elsinore. Either of these names might naturally enough have been spelt and pronounced *Esill* or *Isell* by an Englishman in Shakespeare's time. As for the notion held by some, that the Poet meant *eysell* or *eisel*, an old word for *vinegar*, it seems pretty thoroughly absurd. In strains of hyperbole, such figures of speech were often used by the old poets. Thus in King Richard II.: "The task he undertakes is numbering sands, and *drinking oceans dry*." And in Chaucer's Romaunt of the Rose: "He underfongeth a great paine, that undertaketh to *drinke up Saine*." Also, in Eastward Hoe: "Come, drink up Rhine, Thames, and Meander dry." And in Greene's Orlando Furioso: "Else would I set my mouth to Tygris streams, and drink up overflowing Euphrates." And in Marlowe's Jew of Malta: "Sooner shalt thou drink the ocean dry than conquer Malta." — *Woo't* is a contraction of *wouldst thou*, said to be common in the northern counties of England. As it is spelt *woo't* in the old copies, we know not why certain editors read *wool't*. H.

Queen. This is mere madness;
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.[29]

Ham. Hear you, sir:
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.— [*Exit* HORATIO.

[*To* LAERTES.] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly we shall see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. A Hall in the Castle.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other.—
You do remember all the circumstance?

[29] The folio gives this speech to the King, in whose mouth it is about as proper as a diamond in a swine's snout.—The *golden couplets* are the two eggs of the dove; the nestlings, when first hatched, being covered with a *yellow* down; and in her patient tenderness the mother rarely leaves the nest, till her little-ones attain to some degree of dove-discretion.—*Disclose* was often used for *hatch*. Thus in the Boke of St. Albans, 1496: "For to speke of hawkes: Fyrst, they ben egges, and afterwarde they ben *disclosyd* hawkys." Again: "Comynly goshawkes ben *disclosyd* assoone as the chougns." H.

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.[1] Rashly,—
And prais'd be rashness for it: let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall;[2] and that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,—

Hor. That is most certain

Ham. —Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me,[3] in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal[4]
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
O royal knavery! an exact command,—

[1] The *bilboes* were bars of iron with fetters annexed to them, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, in Spain, where the things were made. To understand the allusion, it should be known that as these fetters connected the legs of the offenders very closely together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep.* The *bilboes* are still shown in the Tower, among the other spoils of the Armada. — *Mutines* is for *mutineers.* See King John, Act ii. sc. 2, note 10.

[2] To *pall* was to fade or fall away; to become, as it were, dead, or without spirit: from the old French *pasler.* Thus in Antony and Cleopatra: "I'll never follow thy *pall'd* fortunes more." — The quartos have *learn* instead of *teach.*

[3] "Esclavine," says Cotgrave, "a sea-gowne, a coarse, high-collar'd and short-sleeved gowne, reaching to the mid-leg, and used mostly by seamen and sailors."

[4] Thus the folio; the quartos, *unfold.* *Unseal* is shown to be right by his *resealing* the packet. — In the second line after, the quartos read "*A* royal knavery" H.

Larded with many several sorts of reasons, —
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,[5] —
That on the supervise, no leisure bated,[6]
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?[7]

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villains, —
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play, — I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statists do,[8]
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service.[9] Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king, —

[5] The Poet several times uses *bugs* for *bugbears*. See 3 Henry VI., Act v. sc. 2, note 1. H.

[6] *The supervise* is the looking over; *no leisure bated* means without any abatement or intermission of time.

[7] The quartos have *now* instead of *me*. H.

[8] *Statists* are statesmen. Blackstone says, that "most of our great men of Shakespeare's time wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones." This must be taken with some qualification; for Elizabeth's two most powerful ministers, Leicester and Burleigh, both wrote good hands. It is certain that there were some who did write most wretched scrawls, but probably not from affectation; though it was accounted a mechanical and vulgar accomplishment to write a fair hand.

[9] Sir Thomas Smyth says of the yeoman soldiers, that they were "the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France." H.

As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a cement 'tween their amities;[10]
And many such like ases of great charge, —
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was Heaven ordinant:
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave't th' impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't

Ham Why, man, they did make love to this em ployment:[11]
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell-incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now upon?
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,

[10] This is oddly expressed, as Johnson observes; but the meaning appears to be, "Stand as a note of connexion between their amities, to prevent them from being brought to a *period*."

[11] This line is met with only in the folio. R.

And with such cozenage; is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?[12]

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England.
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his: I'll count his favours:[13]
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here?

Enter OSRICK.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?[14]

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

[12] The last two lines of this speech, and what follows, down to the entrance of Osrick, is not in the quartos. H.

[13] Rowe changed this to "I'll *court* his *favour*;" but there is no necessity for change. Hamlet means, "I'll make account of his favours," that is, of his *good will*; the general meaning of *favours* in the Poet's time.

[14] In Troilus and Cressida, Thersites says, "How the poor world is pestered with such *water-flies*; diminutives of nature." The gnats and such like insects are not inapt emblems of such busy triflers as Osrick.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to its right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold: the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.[15]

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[*Moving him to put on his Hat.*

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith.[16] Sir, here is, newly come to court, Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences,[17] of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and it but yaw neither,[18] in respect of his quick sail. But, in

[15] The quartos read *or* instead of *for*, thus leaving a break after *complexion*. H.

[16] After this, the folio adds, "Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon," and then omits what follows down to the question, "What's his weapon?" H.

[17] That is, *distinguishing* excellencies.

[18] Thus the quarto of 1604; the others have *raw* instead of

the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue?[19] You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant —

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. — Well, sir.

yaw. The word is thus defined in Cole's Dictionary: "To *yaw*, (as of a ship,) huc illuc vacillare, capite nutare." It occurs as a substantive in Massinger's Very Woman: "O, the *yaws* that she will make! Look to your stern, dear mistress, and steer right." Where Gifford notes, — "A *yaw* is that unsteady motion which a ship makes in a great swell, when, in steering, she inclines to the right or left of her course." Scott also has the word in The Antiquary: "Thus escorted, the Antiquary moved along full of his learning, like a lordly man-of-war, and every now and then *yawing* to starboard and larboard to discharge a broadside upon his followers." — The old copies have *yet* instead of *it*; which, says Mr. Dyce, "was often mistaken by our early printers for *yet*, perhaps because it was written *yt*." *His* is for *its*, referring to *memory*. See 2 Henry IV., Act i. sc. 2, note 16. H.

[19] Malone suspected this should be "in a *mother* tongue." Horatio means to imply, that what with Osrick's euphuism, and what with Hamlet's catching of Osrick's style, they are not speaking in a tongue that can be understood; and he hints that they try *another* tongue, that is, the common one. H.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well, were to know himself.[20]

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed[21] he's unfellow'd.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses; against the which he has impon'd,[22] as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.[23]

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's

[20] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost of human wisdom.

[21] *Meed* is *merit*. See 3 Henry VI., Act ii. sc. 1, note 6.

[22] The quartos have *inpawn'd*. *Impon'd* is probably meant as an Osrickian form of the same word. To *impawn* is to *put in pledge*, that is, to *wager*. H.

[23] The gloss or commentary in old books was usually on the *margin* of the leaf. See Romeo and Juliet, Act i. sc. 3, note 6.

the French bet against the Danish. Why is this impon'd, as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me:[24] let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

[*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours. — He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.[25]

Ham. He did comply with his dug,[26] before he

[24] "The *breathing* time" is the time for exercise. Thus in All's Well that Ends Well, Act i. sc. 2: "A nursery to our gentry, who are sick for *breathing* and exploit." H.

[25] Meaning that Osrick is a raw, unfledged, foolish fellow. It was a common comparison for a forward fool. Thus in Meres's Wits Treasury, 1598: "As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head, as soon as she is hatched."

[26] *Comply* is used in the same sense here as in Act ii. sc. 2, note 35. In Fulwel's Art of Flatterie, 1579, the same idea occurs: "The very sucking babes hath a kind of adulation towards their nurses for the dug." H

suck'd it. Thus has he (and many more of the same bevy,[27] that, I know, the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter;[28] a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions;[29] and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.[30]

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osrick, who brings back to him that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

[27] Thus the folio, misprinting, however, *mine* for *many:* the quartos have *breed* instead of *bevy.* H.

[28] That is, exterior politeness of address.

[29] The quarto of 1604 has "most *prophane* and *trennowed* opinions; in the other quartos *trennowed* is changed to *trennowned* the folio reads as in the text. It may seem strange that this reading should have been thought unsatisfactory, but such is the case Warburton changed *fond* to *fann'd*, and has been followed by divers editors. "Fond and winnowed opinions" are opinions conceitedly fine and winnowed clean of the dust of common sense such opinions as are affected by the amateur exquisites of all times. H.

[30] All that passes between Hamlet and this lord is omitted in the folio.

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.[31]

Ham. I do not think so: since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. Thou would'st not think, how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord, —

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.[32]

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man of aught he leaves knows, what is't to leave betimes?[33] Let be.

[31] The words, "this wager," are wanting in the quartos H

[32] The folio has *gain-giving;* the quartos, *gam-giving* and *game-giving*. *Gain-giving* is *misgiving* or *giving-against;* here meaning a dim prognostic or presentiment of evil. — "Shakespeare," says Coleridge, "seems to mean all Hamlet's character to be brought together before his final disappearance from the scene; — his meditative excess in the grave-digging, his yielding to passion with Laertes, his love for Ophelia blazing out, his tendency to generalize on all occasions in the dialogue with Horatio, his fine gentlemanly manners with Osrick, and his and Shakespeare's own fondness for presentiment." H.

[33] This is the reading of the quartos: the folio reads, "Since no man *has* aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?" Johnson thus interprets the passage: "Since *no man knows aught* of the state which *he leaves;* since he cannot judge what other years may produce; why should we be afraid of *leaving* life betimes?" Warburton's explanation is very ingenious, but perhaps strains the Poet's meaning: "It is true that by death we lose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we are sensible of it; and since death removes all sense of it what matters it how soon we lose them?" H.

Enter the King, the Queen, LAERTES, *Lords,* OSRICK, *and Attendants, with Foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me. [*He puts the hand of* LAERTES *into that of* HAMLET.

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,[34]
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time

[34] This hemstitch is in the folio only. In what follows, the folio misprints *mother* for *brother*, and *ungorg'd* for *ungor'd*. H.

I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play. —
Give us the foils; come on.[35]

Laer. Come; one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i'the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick. — Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord:
Your grace hath laid the odds o'the weaker side.[36]

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both;
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy; let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoops of wine upon that table. —
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire:
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,[37]

[35] The words, "come on," are not in the quartos. H.

[36] The King had wagered *six Barbary horses* to a few *rapiers poniards*, &c.; that is, about *twenty* to one. These are the *odds* here meant. The odds the King means in the next speech were *twelve* to *nine* in favour of Hamlet, by Laertes giving him three.

[37] The folio has *union*; the quartos, *unice* and *onix*. *Union*

Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups:
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
"Now the king drinks to Hamlet."—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well,—again.

King. Stay; give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and Cannons shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch; I do confess.[38]

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.[39]—

is a name for large and precious pearls. Afterwards, on finding out what the King's *union* was, Hamlet tauntingly asks, "Is thy *union* here?" According to Rondeletus, pearls were thought to have an exhilarating quality. To swallow them in a draught, was esteemed a high strain of magnificence. Thus in If You know not Me You know Nobody:

> "Here sixteen thousand pound at one clap goes,
> Instead of sugar: Gresham *drinks this pearl*
> Unto the queen his mistress." H

[38] The words, "A touch, a touch," are not in the quartos. H.

[39] This speaking of Hamlet as "*fat* and scant of breath" is greatly at odds with the idea we are apt to form of him; though

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet

Ham. Good madam, —

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord: I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup! it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet 't is almost 'gainst my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally:
I pray you, pass with your best violence:
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.[40]

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[LAERTES *wounds* HAMLET; *then, in scuffling, they change Rapiers, and* HAMLET *wounds* LAERTES.

there is no good reason why the being somewhat fat should in any point take off from his excellences as a man or a prince. It is thought by some, however, and seems indeed likely enough to have been true, that the expression was used with special reference to Burbage, the original actor of Hamlet's part. Burbage died in 1619; and in a manuscript elegy upon his death, sold, not many years since, among Heber's books, are the following lines, which both ascertain his original performance of the part, and also render it probable that the words in question had reference to him:

"No more young Hamlet, though but *scant of breath,*
Shall cry 'Revenge!' for his dear father's death." H

[40] That is, that you trifle with me as if I were a child, or one not worth "your best violence." — The quartos have *sure* instead of *afeard.* H.

King. Part them! they are incens'd.
Ham. Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*
Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!
Hor. They bleed on both sides. — How is't, my lord?
Osr. How is't, Laertes?
Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrick;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.
Ham. How does the queen?
King. She swoons to see them bleed.
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink! — O, my dear Hamlet!
The drink, the drink! — I am poison'd! [*Dies.*
Ham. O villainy! — Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! seek it out. [LAERTES *falls.*
Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good:
In thee there is not half an hour of life;[41]
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated, and envenom'd.[42] The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me: lo! here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd:
I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.
Ham. The point
Envenom'd too! — Then, venom, to thy work!
[*Stabs the King*
All. Treason! treason!
King. O! yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion: — is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [*King dies*

[41] So the folio; the quartos, "half an *hour's* life." H.
[42] *Unbated* is *unblunted*, as in Act iv. sc. 7, note 18. H

Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself. —
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. — Wretched queen, adieu! —
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest,) O! I could tell you —
But let it be. — Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by Heaven, I'll have't. —
O God! — Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. —

[*March afar off, and Shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio!
The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit: [42]

[42] To *overcrow* is to overcome, to subdue. "These noblemen

I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy th' election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited [44] — The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart! — Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest! —
Why does the drum come hither. [*March within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the English Ambassadors, and Others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc! [45] — O, proud death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?

1 *Amb.* The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd;
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?

laboured with tooth and naile to *overcrow*, and consequently to overthrow one another." — *Holinshed's History of Ireland.*

[44] *Occurrents* was much used in the Poet's time for *events* or *occurrences*. — *Solicited* is *prompted* or *excited*; as "this supernatural *soliciting*" in Macbeth. — "*More* and *less*" is *greater* and *smaller*; a common usage with the old writers. — The folio adds, after silence, "O, o, o, o." H.

[45] To *cry on* was to *exclaim against*. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to call it *havoc*. — JOHNSON. — *Quarry* was the term used for a heap of slaughtered game. See Macbeth, Act i. sc. 2 note 3

Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it th' ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,[46]
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to th' yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause;[47]
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,[48]
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;

[46] It has been already observed that *jump* and *just*, or *exactly* are synonymous. See Act i. sc. 1, note 10.

[47] The quartos have "and *for no* cause." The phrase *put on* here means *instigated* or *set on foot*. *Cunning* refers, apparently, to Hamlet's action touching "the packet," and *forc'd cause*, to the "compelling occasion," which moved him to that piece of practice. H.

[48] That is, some rights *which are remembered* in this kingdom

For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldier's music, and the rights of war,
Speak loudly for him. —
Take up the bodies. — Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss. —
Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead March*

[*Exeunt, marching; after which, a Peal of Ordnance is shot off.*

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